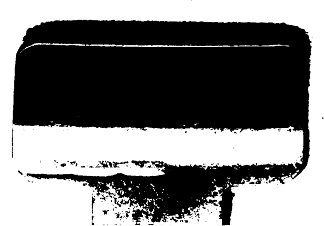




Roslin Suedois pinx

François Boucher

EUZE AND BOUCHER

BY

ELIZA F. POLLARD

WITH THIRTY-NINE ILLUSTRATIONS

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INTRODUCTION

A SKETCH OF THE FRENCH SCHOOL OF PAINTING OF THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

EVERY epoch in the world's history is marked by the style of its literature and its artistic productions.

The century which produced a Voltaire and a Rousseau developed also the genius of a Rubens, a Rembrandt, and a Vandyck. The first-named may be considered as the master of the French school of painting of the eighteenth century, because of the influence he exercised over the artists of that period. The energy and exuberant animal life of Rubens's figures appealed to the senses of French artists, as did also his marvellous colouring.

Greuze and his friends were in the habit of spending whole days on the top of a ladder in the Louvre or the Luxembourg staring at Rubens's canvases, hoping to discover the secret of the pigment which could produce those exquisite flesh tints, which are still the admiration of all artists.

Sir Joshua Reynolds, in speaking of Rubens, says: "He was the best workman with his tools that ever used a pencil; great alike in handling and as a colourist, but his works are wanting in dignity and refinement." Everything Rubens produced was large and overflowing with animal life, coarse in conception and design, often lacking even in decency, but the master's hand was evident in every stroke of the brush or of the pencil. He had many pupils, many imitators, but no rivals.

His influence over the French school of the eighteenth century was considerable, but it was modified, because the physical and material spirit of the age had changed. The scientific diagnosis of man and woman was superseded by a sense of the picturesque: allegorical representations, mythological subjects, medallions encircled in flowers, cupids showering kisses on roses, figures of women in flowing draperies—such was the style which still goes by the name of Louis XV. style.

The two artists who were responsible for this style were Chardin and Boucher. The former was born in 1699, the latter in 1703; they were therefore contemporaries.

Chardin was termed the first moral painter, and was remarkable for the truth, simplicity, and neatness of his finish.

Boucher overshadowed him. Born in Paris, he

was proudly named "the Glory of Paris." He is essentially the artist of the eighteenth century. His style is summed up in the word "prettiness"; it expresses his whole genius, the fashion and morals of the period. His school was the most frequented; his imitators were legion. He dominated the soul and the spirit of the artistic world, and he maintained this sway for over half a century, dying in 1778, before the Revolution had changed the artistic taste of the public, as it changed everything.

His most characteristic picture is one of Henry IV. and Gabrielle d'Estrées, bound one to the other with garlands of flowers, and encircled by cupids. Greuze took him to a great extent for his model, but he lacked the grace of execution, the light frivolity of ideas, which were the essential characteristics of Boucher's style.

La Tour belongs to the same period; he was born in 1702. He entirely confined himself to portraits in pastels, and so great was his renown at one time, that even Madame de Pompadour bowed before him.

His temper was execrable, and a very characteristic story is told concerning him and the great *courtisane*.

He had refused to paint her portrait, but after much persuasion, he at last agreed to do so on certain conditions, the principal one being that

no person whatsoever should enter the room whilst he was at work. This being agreed upon, the lady was introduced into the studio, where La Tour placed her in the position he considered most advantageous. Before setting to work he began by removing his wig, then his coat, loosening his cravat, and, in fact, putting himself thoroughly at his ease. Having done this, he threw himself heart and soul into his task.

He had been occupied about half an hour when the door of the studio opened and his Majesty Louis XV. entered. He greeted the artist graciously, proceeded to take a seat beside the lady, and to converse with her.

For a few moments La Tour appeared neither to see nor hear what was going on; then suddenly he rose, packed up his artistic paraphernalia, took his coat and wig, and quietly remarking, "Madame has broken her promise; I do not like to be disturbed," he left the room.

Any other man would have found himself lodged in the Bastille that same night, but La Tour was more than a man—he was an artist, was treated accordingly—and begged to return and to finish the portrait.

After much persuasion he consented to do so. He charged a fabulous price for this picture, which is familiar to most people, and is certainly a *chef-d'œuvre* in pastel.

La Tour was extremely rapid in his work. He exhibited at one exhibition no less than eighteen portraits, all in pastel; one especially of J. J. Rousseau, which was much admired.

In the second half of the eighteenth century we have three distinguished artists: Greuze born in 1725; Moreau in 1741; Prudhon in 1758. The latter was essentially a portrait-painter, though during the Revolution, when he was driven out of Paris, he had recourse for a living to any and every style. Moreau, under Louis XV. and Louis XVI., held the envied position of "Dessinateur du Cabinet du Roi"; he was, therefore, a court painter, and produced two large canvases representing "The Crowning of Louis XVI." and the "Fêtes given by the City of Paris to celebrate the Birth of the Dauphin."

He lost all his appointments with the fall of the Monarchy, and suffered greatly during the years of the Republic. Under the Empire he reappeared, and at the Restoration, Louis XVIII. reinstated him in his place. He did not, however, live long to enjoy his honours, dying in 1814.

It is impossible to omit from this list of French eighteenth-century painters the well-known artist, Antoine Watteau, born in 1684, who died at the early age of thirty-seven in July, 1721. Probably the hardships of his early life were the cause of

the ill-health from which he suffered, and which terminated in consumption.

He went to Paris at the early age of eighteen, and began at the very lowest grade of artist-work, being a sorry hack for a picture dealer; but genius will make its way, and soon he was working with the decorator Andreas at the Luxembourg; then he became a pupil at the Academy, and in 1717 a member of the same. He was famous as the creator of a new style of art.

His pictures enjoyed a high vogue in what has been termed the "Rococo age." They consisted chiefly of small landscapes, with figures in court dress moving to and fro; they are fitly termed "mock pastoral idylls." Their colouring is charming, and the designs exquisitely graceful.

Frederic the Great was a great admirer of Watteau, and made a large collection of his pictures, which now belong to the German Emperor; the remainder are dispersed among English collectors.

From amongst these artists of the French school, François Boucher and Jean Baptiste Greuze stand forth between the older and younger painters of the century, remarkable figures, innovators, both of them, creators of special styles of painting. For this reason we purpose dealing with them at some length. Their pictures are so numerous, and have been so greatly admired,

especially by the English public, that we trust a sketch of these artists' lives and their works may interest all lovers of Art.

We have striven to show our readers how the fluctuations and the changes in the private and the social life of the French necessarily influenced Art, and caused certain irregularities in style and mannerism, which it would be difficult otherwise to account for. Both these artists at one time attained great renown, but at the Revolution and in the early years of the eighteenth century the public taste underwent a reaction, and they were discredited. It was but a passing cloud; of late years they have once more come to the fore, and there is scarcely a European collection of paintings, public or private, which does not possess one or two samples of the works of both François Boucher and Jean Baptiste Greuze.

JEAN BAPTISTE GREUZE

CHAPTER I

THE INNOVATOR

Jean Baptiste Greuze a child of the people—The effects of class upon an artistic temperament — Natural talent — Family opposition — Early education — Self-assurance — Rapid advance—First picture—Greuze introduces a new style into the French School of Art—Philosophical reason why it was acceptable to the public—The *bourgeoisie* of no consideration before the Revolution—Diderot's influence on Art—Stern Republicanism and virtue take the place of the style Louis XV.

JEAN BAPTISTE GREUZE was born at Tournus, August 29th, 1725. Like many a great artist before and after him, he was of humble birth, a child of the people. He belonged to the class known in France as "la petite bourgeoisie." His father was a slater, and the early impressions of childhood influenced in a very marked degree his artistic career. The subjects of his pictures were taken from his immediate surroundings, and consisted almost entirely of scenes of

family life, which appealed to the public taste, and thus won renown for the young artist. From all accounts it is evident that Jean Baptiste displayed at an early age a marked talent for drawing—scrawling his impressions of people or things in unsuitable places, where they caught every eye and displeased his father. That he could ever earn a living by painting was so problematical, that his father and an equally important personage, his godmother—a worthy bakeress—would not entertain the idea, but as the nearest approach to the fulfilment of his wishes, it was decided that he should be apprenticed to an architect. "Man proposes, God disposes"—a very slight occurrence turned the tide in his favour. On St. James's Day, the anniversary of his father's fête, he presented his parent with an etching of the saint's head, which so astonished the slater that he jumped at once to the conclusion that his son was a genius, and he forthwith entered into communication with a painter named Grandon. The result of the correspondence was that very shortly afterward Jean Baptiste was despatched to Grandon's studio at Lyons. It was Greuze's first great joy, and if it was of short duration, it was none the less one of the sensations of his youth. The day he entered Grandon's studio as an apprentice, was the first step towards the attainment of his heart's desire.

He had implicit faith in himself, and never at any time throughout his career did this great impetus to success forsake him. The work which went forth from Grandon's studio by no means represented high art—quantity, not quality, was the rule of the day. From the Grandon workshop portraits and pictures were sent forth wholesale into the towns and country round about Lyons, where they evidently attained a certain popularity among the uneducated in art. To the student the result of such rough-and-ready work was deteriorating, and many a time Jean Baptiste must have turned away with dissatisfaction and a certain impatience from work which in his artist's soul he despised.

The very day his apprenticeship expired he bade his master, Grandon, farewell, and without hesitation directed his steps—as so many have done before and after him—towards Paris, that magnet which draws all men possessed of aims and ambition into its charmed circle.

Young, light-hearted, full of faith in his own genius, he faced his destiny fearlessly. Of worldly goods he had little or none, his brush and palette were to him his bread-winners, and he was content. As the "diligence" rolled through the fair land of France towards the capital he was glad, because he was possessed of that sense of power which we call genius. Greuze's appearance was

by no means remarkable: of middle height, with a rather large head and well-developed forehead, brilliant eyes, which looked out upon the world recognising, because of his artist nature,—in itself a gift divine,—that the world was very good! There is no portrait of him at this age, but one taken by himself a few years later gives the impression of a man satisfied with himself and his surroundings. He had every reason to be so, for if he began on the lowest rung of the ladder of fame, he climbed steadily to the top. Yet it was an arduous task for him to win his way through a crowd of aspirants for fame, with nothing but his own genius to assist him. He had no patrons; his vanity was easily wounded, and his very talents exposed him to the spite and envy of many. He was just so far above the common herd that he could not be passed over unnoticed, and many resented this, and did their best to extinguish him; but he paid little heed to the wasps who sought to sting him. Industriously he studied daily at the Academy, taking lessons of Natoire, and between whiles painting small pictures for sale, as a means of earning his daily bread. He was well able to defend himself, for even to his professor he gave scant courtesy when his pride was wounded. Once when Natoire pointed out to him that some of his figures were lame, he turned round on his master and said sharply,

THE FATHER READING THE BIBLE TO HIS FAMILY

"Sir, you would be glad if you could do as well!"

We cannot be surprised after this that he was generally disliked and treated also with scant courtesy. At last his hour of triumph dawned, when he passed from obscurity into light, and was recognised as an artist of talent.

In the year 1755 his picture of "Le père de famille expliquant la Bible à ses enfants" was bought by that great connoisseur, M. de la Live Jully, exhibited by him at his own house, and afterwards hung in the "Salon," where it won universal approbation. In its simplicity it differed from the decorative style of Boucher and Chardin, and for this very reason it attracted general attention.

Greuze was an innovator; he introduced an entirely new style into the French school of art. His subjects and their treatment were alike new; the light frivolity of Watteau and Boucher, their garlands of flowers and their cherubs, were superseded by a new psychological attempt to interpret human nature simply and truly. Religion and family life are represented by Greuze with a certain serious grace and tenderness, which appealed at once to the heart and intellect of the people. When "Le père de famille" was exhibited in the Salon of 1755 and created a sensation, it was attractive primarily, because the style and the

subject were both new; secondly, there was a certain charm in the minute details of the humble interior. It depicted a class which, previous to the Revolution, was seldom brought into evidence. Whatever the cause might be, whether it was a fluke of fortune, or a sudden awakening of the multitude to the appreciation of natural sentiments, it now matters little. Greuze made his mark, and from thenceforth he had a style and a personality of his own.

The philosophy with which this period was rife, which witnessed the apotheosis of Diderot and Rousseau, had much to do with Greuze's conception. The world—even the aristocratic world—was tired of the artificial court life, its paints and perfumes, and turned eagerly to what they believed to be a better and purer state of things.

The worship of Nature had crept into the hearts of men and women; pastoral attire and pastoral songs were the order of the day. Marie Antoinette must need have her Trianon! It came to be an accepted theory that all corruption emanated from the aristocracy, and that virtue and honesty were only to be found under the peasant's coarse blouse. So Diderot preached and Greuze became his disciple, and, on canvas, his interpreter. The pendulum swung that way, for a time, at least, until the Revolution opened men's eyes to the justice and injustice of such

sweeping judgments, and by its brute force broke down that element of sentimentalism with which the philosophers of the eighteenth century had invested all classes of French society. So for a time the philosopher and the artist adopted the same lines: their dream was to create a society founded on a moral basis of family life. In Diderot's own words, it was necessary "to make virtue agreeable and vice odious." "Such ought to be," he writes, "the object of every honest man who takes up the pen, the brush, or the chisel." The hour of reaction had come. Boucher's shepherds and shepherdesses, cherubs, gods and goddesses, were superseded by Greuze's fresh faces of boys and girls full of grace, and with that wonderful charm which belongs to youth and innocence, and which he depicted to perfection.

His first success was followed rapidly by fresh productions. The portrait of "Monsieur Sylvestre," Director of the Academy, established his reputation as a portrait-painter, and from thenceforth he was greatly in request. The delicacy of his colouring, his attention to the minutest details, were highly appreciated. He became the fashion —not always a desirable consummation for an artist, especially in the case of Greuze, whose natural vanity and self-appreciation needed no such impetus.

CHAPTER II

"AN IDYLL"

Fear of launching himself—By nature a copyist—Want of education—Vanity—Influence of Diderot on his character—Journey to Italy, the world's school of art—The effect on Greuze in an artistic point of view—The romance of life—Return to France and to his old style of painting—The influence of Paris—Models—His character and moods difficult to deal with—His love for the old Paris of the Middle Ages—Street wandering—The moral of numerous progenitors: large families a guarantee of virtue and honesty.

HAVING struck gold, Greuze continued to produce the same style of pictures, as if fearful of launching himself in strange waters. Indeed, his enemies accused him at the time of copying his own productions, and there certainly is a strong family resemblance between "Le père expliquant la Bible à ses enfants" and "Le fruit d'une bonne éducation." In the last-named picture, instead of an old man it is the young girl who is reading, and the parents are listening, the father with deep attention, the mother with more admiration for her daughter than interest in the subject.



THE ITALIAN PEDLAR

If Greuze had enemies, men jealous of his success, it was, as we have already said, to a great extent his own fault. He was a man of little education, weak in character, and painfully vain. His faith in his own genius, which had been a lever to success, degenerated into overbearing conceit.

His close connection with Diderot, through and by whom he learnt the A B C of philosophy, tended to encourage and exaggerate a natural leaning to self-admiration. He was "agréé" by the Academy, and in the same year, 1757, was taken by l'Abbé Gouguenot to Italy.

This journey was almost obligatory. Italy was the school of art; an artist's education was considered incomplete if he had not performed this pilgrimage. It had, however, no permanent effect on Greuze as an artist: he saw that lovely country, its *chefs-d'œuvre*, its picture galleries, unmoved—the only result, as far as he was concerned, was the production of a few pictures by no means superior, or even equal, to his earlier productions. The principal one, "Le Geste Napolitain," represented a young Italian lady dismissing her lover, who is disguised as a pedlar, and was unmasked by the lady's old nurse. The idea of this may possibly have originated in an adventure which befell Greuze during his visit to Rome, and which in discreet language, but with a

touch of boastful vanity, he often alluded to, even when he was old and grey-haired. The story may, perhaps, interest our readers.

Greuze had been provided with a letter of introduction to the Duke Dell Orr, and was received by this noble most courteously, introduced to his beautiful young daughter Lætitia, and requested to superintend her artistic education. It is difficult to understand how a man of the world could thrust two young people into each other's society without seeing what was sure to take place, namely, that they would fall in love with each other. It is just possible that the inordinate pride of an Italian nobleman excluded from his mind the idea of the possibility of such degradation. An artist, in his eyes, was little superior to his *maître d'hôtel.* His talent gave him a position apart, and allowed of his being admitted to a certain intimacy; but that he should aspire to a union with a daughter of a noble house, or that she should cast so much as a glance on him as a possible suitor, never so much as entered his head. But the old story repeats itself—there are no bars or locks strong enough to keep out love. If the grave philosopher Abelard could not resist the charms of Héloise, how much less was it to be expected that an artist, with an artist's temperament, should fail to be captivated by the young and beautiful Italian maiden, who shared his

passion and took but little trouble to hide it? To Greuze's credit be it told, that as soon as he became aware of their mutual passion he fled from a temptation which he knew it would be difficult—nay, almost impossible—to resist. From words which he, or someone in their *entourage*, let drop, his fellow-students got an inkling that something was in the wind, and they nicknamed him "the Cherub in love." This affected him but slightly. It had been well if the affair had ended here, but the Princess Lætitia was not so minded; she was genuinely in love with the young French artist, and when he withdrew from conscientious motives, she was determined not to be thwarted. She refused all food, worked herself into a state of fever, till her nurse, who had reared her, was almost beside herself with anxiety, and the doctor who visited her daily, finding his fever potions and medicines took no effect, began to suspect that there was something more behind, which his nostrums could not reach.

"Humour her," he said to the nurse. "If you do not let her have her way, I will not answer for the consequences."

"Pardon me, signor, you do not know what you are ordering," answered the faithful old woman, and she returned to the bedside of her charge, alternately coaxing or scolding her. But Lætitia turned her face to the wall, and would

not be comforted. Then, unwillingly, the nurse traversed the long corridors to the gallery where Greuze was painting. She came up behind him as he stood at his easel, absorbed in the study of the great master. "Signor!" she said.

He started, and looked round; instantly he dropped his brush. "The Princess, is she worse?" he asked.

"She is neither worse nor better; she weeps by night and day, since you forsook her."

"What can I do?" answered Greuze. "Surely you understand it were dishonourable of me to take advantage of the Princess's weakness. The Duke has received me with kindness, and I am only a poor artist, a workman. Not for one moment does he imagine I could attempt to court his daughter! This love, which we both feel, is a great misfortune to which we must not yield, so I have retired. You tell me the Princess has many suitors for her hand. Though it cuts me to the heart, I rejoice, she will wed and be happy, and so forget this fancy for a poor French artist. Go and tell her this from me, and beseech her to be wise." Thus he played "Sir Launcelot" to his "Elaine."

"You are right, signor, and I honour you," said the nurse; "but the Princess is very wilful, and I doubt if she will heed me," and with that she took her departure. The next day she returned, wringing her hands.

"She will die! The physician says so. Her father is in despair. She is delirious, and will heed no one. There is no cure, the physician says, because he cannot tell what ails her! She will touch no food, she will drink only water to quench the fever which devours her. She will suffer no one to come near her except myself, because with me she can speak of you. 'How does he look? What does he say? Good nurse, bring him to me that I may see him once again before I die.' That is her cry. Signor, you must come," continued the nurse; "you will not know her, she is so white and thin, a shadow of her once beautiful self; it breaks my heart to see her, I who nursed her!" and covering her face with her hands, she wept bitterly.

Greuze was deeply moved. What was he to do? How was he to act? If he went to Lætitia, he would compromise both her and himself. In his broken Italian he explained this to the nurse, who answered: "I will arrange everything for you. Go on working as long as there is light. The Duke entertains in the great banqueting-room to-night princes and senators and many great nobles; the servants will be engaged serving, and in the kitchens—only the girl Anita will be left to wait on her sick mistress. I will send her on some commission, which will keep her absent for an hour or more. When it is time for you to leave,

instead of going down by the grand staircase, turn to the left, and knock three times at the door facing you; I will open and take you to the Princess."

Greuzé was forced to yield. He told her to tell Lætitia he would come that night. All day he hardened his heart, determined not to give any sign which she might interpret as a desire to yield to his passion, rather to throw cold water on her feelings for him.

Face to face with Lætitia, he found this harder than he had imagined. The girl was more lovely in her languor than when radiant with health. She received him in an elegant boudoir, seated in a large armchair, arrayed all in white, her beautiful black air in two long plaits, reaching almost to the ground.

She held out her hands to him. Her large black eyes enveloped him. Then, without warning, there burst from her a wild passionate confession of love. Greuze, overcome, entreated her to pardon him for having caused her so much pain. He was deeply affected; how could it be otherwise? Nevertheless, upon leaving her, he determined not to return. He was in despair, and wandered round and about the palace inquiring after her.

The Duke's own conduct increased his difficulties; it seemed almost as if he were playing into

the lover's hands. One day, when Greuze was painting in St. Peter's, the Duke appeared suddenly, and after complimenting him upon his work, asked him to come with him to the palace and see two Titians which he had bought.

To refuse would have been churlish, and might have given rise to unpleasant questions, so Greuze accompanied the Duke to the palace, inspected the Titians, and duly admired them. He was, however, quite unprepared for the next move, and was taken by surprise when the Duke asked him to copy the pictures for his brother-in-law. Again he was obliged to consent, and his daily visits to the palace were renewed. The position was evidently an awkward one, for hours he was under the same roof as the girl whom he knew to be sick with love for him, and yet they were far apart; for in those old ancestral palaces the living rooms of the family were far away from the picture galleries, state apartments, saloons, and banqueting rooms, which occupied the principal part of the establishment. For Lætitia to have traversed the intervening space between her own apartments and the gallery where Greuze was at work would have excited the attention of the numerous domestics lounging about in idle Italian fashion. This had to be avoided.

Greuze made no effort to bridge over the distance between them. He saw complications

looming in the distance if he renewed the intimacy, and however much in his heart he might have desired it, wisdom stepped in and forbade it.

But the passionate Italian girl was not to be thus thwarted. An intrigue was of itself an object worth living for; moreover, she was truly in love with Greuze. In vain he told her that he was not worthy of her love, that she was far above him in wealth and position, that he must return to France shortly, therefore it would be well for them to say farewell, and that this interview should be their last.

She listened to him open-eyed, with parted lips. Suddenly she rose to her feet, threw herself into her nurse's arms, crying, "He will not love me; I must die!"

What man could have resisted this appeal? Greuze fell on his knees, swore he loved her, was her humble servant, and would do whatever she chose.

"I choose you to marry me, then," she said, smiles breaking through her tears. "I am not dependent upon my father; I am rich; I have inherited my mother's fortune. You will study, and in time will become a second Titian, and my father will be proud of you, and he will forgive us both."

"You cannot marry monsieur; your father has promised your hand to Prince Pallieri," interposed her nurse.

"I know my father would have me marry his eternal Cafa, the oldest and ugliest man in Rome, or the young Count Pallieri, whom I have seen and never wish to see again. I will marry the man I love and none other," interrupted Lætitia.

In this mood matters went on for a few days. It was in vain Greuze tried to reason with her; whenever he spoke seriously, she jested him, or becoming serious herself, called him "perfide," wept and tore her hair. Greuze was at his wits' end. Marry her he neither could nor would, so at last he returned to the old plan of simulating illness; he did this so effectually that he became really ill, and was laid up for six months. At the end of that time the Princess was about to be married; all the arrangements had been made, but she sent a message to Greuze to the effect that she only awaited a sign from him to break everything off, and fly with him to his own country. He gave no sign.

Then she entreated him to see her once more. To this he consented. There was a last passionate meeting, and then they parted for ever!

Lætitia was led to the altar; Greuze left Italy and returned to France, carrying with him a portrait of Lætitia, which in after years is reproduced in two pictures: "L'embarras d'une couronne" and "La prière d'Amour"; this last is significantly dedicated to the Princess Pignatelli. So

ends Greuze's romance of love, upon which in later years he dwelt with much complacency. One or two heads, "The Idle Italian," belong to this Italian period; then he returned to his old style. His picture of "The Basket of Broken Eggs" won for him a marked success. But even in the early years of his artistic career his compositions were all more or less similar; he delighted in a vast number of accessories, which had often no *raison d'être* beyond the fact that they gave scope to his genius in his treatment of children and young girls. His figures are often crowded together, to the detriment one of the other. This is especially noticeable in his "Retour de Nourrice," where, on a comparatively small canvas, we have, besides nine figures, a donkey, a dog, and a formidable amount of furniture. It is redeemed by the charm of the faces, their exquisite colouring and expression. The young mother's eager delight at the sight of her child; the nurse's sweet, persuasive tenderness as she tries to force her struggling charge into its mother's arms; the critical expression on the grandmother's face as she examines the child through her spectacles, and the curiosity of the brothers and sisters, to whom the new-comer is a stranger more or less welcome.

For his models Greuze wandered through the streets of Paris seeking inspiration, and if he



THE NURSELING'S RETURN

chanced to come across a face which pleased him, he never rested till he had landed the owner safely in his studio.

Like all artists, he was capricious and easily tired of what at first charmed him. During his sojourn at Rome l'Abbé Gouguenot suffered not a little from his humour. It frequently happened that he would declare the presence of certain persons absolutely necessary for the composition of his picture, and when with difficulty they had been got together he would quietly declare that it was too late, the inspiration had departed from him, he was no longer in a frame of mind to work—consequently, the models were dismissed, naturally not without payment.

It appears that these moods were by no means rare, and tried the patience of even his best friends. But the streets of Paris were his favourite hunting ground, and the Paris of Louis XV. yielded a rich harvest of impressions and physiognomies.

It was still the old Paris of the Middle Ages, —dirty, unodoriferous, but delightful. Notwithstanding the majestic improvement of the "Grand Roi," there were still streets untouched by the pickaxe, so narrow, that it was by no means impossible to pass across from one attic to the other. And what a population! Men, women, and children; pretty *grisettes* peering behind the

shop windows; soldiers and civilians looking to the right hand and to the left seeking adventures; a whole world of unrevealed romance, teeming with human life, with love, hate, and passion. Through this crowd Greuze went his way daily —sometimes across the Pont-Neuf, alive with buyers and sellers; sometimes in the bird markets on the quays; more often still in the Halles or big central markets, where amid the fresh fish, vegetables and fruit, he caught a *geste*, an attitude, which was to him a revelation. A word, a look, a smile—it needed nothing more to fire the artist's imagination and make him produce a picture which delighted the world. Strange though it may seem, amidst all this assiduous study of Parisian life he remained essentially provincial. The big family circle was continually represented in such a fashion as to impress upon the beholders that its existence was a necessary guarantee of honesty and virtue. The self-denial necessary to rear and send out into the world such a numerous progeny was evident and, therefore, praiseworthy; the reward reaped was love and tenderness which each member bore to the other.

By such a representation Greuze won his primary success, but like all artists he was not wholly satisfied to continue in the same lines.

His Paris studies caused him to wander into



A STUDY

other paths. At the Salon of 1759 he exhibited no less than sixteen pictures, most of them small studies of heads and portraits which at the time of their production were not by any means appreciated as they have since been.

Diderot expresses himself strongly on what he considers the artist's falling off. "The Greuzes are by no means wonderful this year," he writes; "the workmanship is stiff and the colouring insipid. Greuze pleased me once, but I do not care for his work now." We shall see that this momentary depreciation did not last long; he soon regained Diderot's approbation.

CHAPTER III

SNARED

An artist's nature, its necessities — How Greuze became the painter of the day—How and why he never attained the summit of Parnassus—Rubens the father of French art—Wille, the engraver — The bookseller's shop — The spider and the fly—Mademoiselle Barbuty—A woman's persistency —Marriage at St. Medard—Small means—Greuze's admiration of, and devotion to, his wife—Deception and disillusion —Domestic discord—Daily scenes—Greuze devotes himself to his art, but his wife interferes even with his pupils—Wretched life—His children are sent to the convent because Madame neglects them—Legal separation—Greuze returns to his art and solitude.

THERE is nothing so necessary to the full development of an artist's nature as congenial surroundings, which leave the mind and heart free from care; fitted to conceive things beautiful, to soar into regions of thought and imagination, to create a new world for himself and others. The artists—by which term we mean all who, with the brush or with the pen, create for themselves two lives, two distinct personalities which act upon each other, making or marring one or the other; for seldom, alas! is there per-



THE LOVING THOUGHT

fect unity in these dual lives. Too often the daily needs of the family, grinding poverty, and the material necessities of existence, oblige rapid production, the sending forth into the world immature or imperfect work: this is one of the greatest trials, the greatest evil, to which artists are subjected.

But there is a strong counter-influence, a motive power, which redeems the position and exalts what appears mean and sordid into something sublime, giving colour to the artist's picture and divine eloquence to the writer's imagination.

And this thing is what we call "love" and self-sacrifice, the outcome of love. The midnight lamp burns low, the oil is well-nigh spent, the loved ones are sleeping; to-morrow they will need food and warmth, and all the many things which make up material existence and which are only to be won by courage and the industry to arise and labour.

The effort is often great, for the artist's nature is dreamy. He would fain wait for inspiration, but the wife and the children cannot wait; therefore, as the plough is driven through the furrows, he racks his brain, he plies pen or pencil, and sends forth into the world thoughts tender and true, pictures which charm the multitude.

Greuze had battled with poverty as a young man, and had been fairly successful; having only

himself to care for, he had been in no haste, and had continued studying. But he was about to enter upon a new phase of existence, the result of which was in all probability the reason he never soared into the higher regions of art. He had no natural imagination; he seldom went beyond what he had seen; his colouring was often defective; his grey backgrounds were heavy and sombre—but he was the painter of the day, because he appealed to the sentiments then in vogue. This was a period of reaction, the glorification of family life, succeeding to the utter disregard of all social morality in the "*siècle Louis quinze.*" A dry season demands rain from heaven; so, after a period of libertinage, soft, warm emotions floated in the air, nurtured by a Rousseau or a Florian. Society caressed the image of Virtue, dukes crowned village maidens, mothers nursed their own babies, sentimentalism was the tone which pervaded the fashionable world, and which Greuze fostered—from thence came his popularity. But before entering upon a fuller description of his artistic career, it would be well to study the life of the man whose domestic troubles did so much to prevent the full development of his talents, and placed him therefore on the second line of artists instead of on the first.

After Greuze's return from Italy he applied him-

self diligently to the study of Rubens, who is truly termed "the father of French art." For weeks together he might be seen almost daily in the galleries of the Luxembourg, in the company of his friend the engraver, Wille, mounted on a ladder, his face in close proximity to the picture under consideration. Wille, the engraver, was from first to last Greuze's faithful friend and admirer. At one time he assisted him considerably by introducing strangers to him, who desired to have their portraits painted; to this, in a great measure, he owed his reputation as a portrait-painter.

In his peregrinations through Paris Greuze must have stumbled upon many beautiful faces, which might well, and probably did, capture his fancy; but we meet our fate when and where we least expect it, and Greuze's was destined to be a stumbling-block in his way, a daily and hourly trouble.

Till within the last few years the left bank of the Seine was noted for, not only its libraries, but for the general sale of books, old and new, which were exposed the whole length of the quays upon the stone parapets which rise above and along the embankment. Literary men and artists of all descriptions were visitors to these shops, and might be seen daily poring over these open book-stalls in search of cheap editions.

One bookseller's shop was at this time more popular than any other. It was situated on the Quai St. Augustin, and belonged to a Monsieur Babuty, the fortunate father of Mademoiselle Babuty, whose beauty was the great attraction.

No one ever passed the shop, where she stood behind the counter, without stepping in.

Diderot writes of her with considerable warmth: "I had a great admiration for her when I was young and she was Mademoiselle Babuty; she was white and straight as a lily and pink as a rose."

Her wit also attracted him and others. One day Diderot entered the shop, and by way of excuse asked:

"Mademoiselle, have you '*Les Contes*' *de La Fontaine ou de Peronne?*"

"Here they are. Do you want no other book?" she answered.

"Pardon, mademoiselle——" but his hesitation intimated that he did not dare ask for the volume which he required.

"It does not signify—speak out!" she said, with a charming smile.

He named the book, the title of which was decidedly risky.

"Oh, sir!" she exclaimed, "who reads such books?"

"Ah, it is very bad, then!" answered Diderot.

"You see, I have not read it, and did not know. Thank you for warning me"; and he left the shop, chuckling.

Greuze followed in his friend's footsteps, but he lingered in the little shop longer. It was very much the story of the "Spider and the Fly."

"'Will you walk into my parlour?'
Said the spider to the fly;
'Tis the prettiest little parlour
You ever yet did spy.'"

Greuze went and came, attracted by her charming face and—to him—irresistible manners. Her physiognomy was, and remained for a long time, that of a child: a smooth, round forehead; eyebrows well raised from the eyes, which gave a peculiarly naïve look to the face; long eyelashes, a well-cut, tender mouth, and a youthful oval contour—such was Mademoiselle Babuty. There was no apparent cunning, nothing to warn a man to be on his guard.

Barely a month had elapsed since Greuze had become an assiduous visitor when she asked him one day:

"Would you marry me if I consented?"

"Mademoiselle," he answered, thinking to be very wary, "who would not be happy to pass their lives with such an amiable person?"

That was sufficient. The following day she

went out and purchased a pair of gorgeous imitation diamond earrings. When asked how she came by them, she unhesitatingly replied, "They are a present from Monsieur Greuze; we are engaged to be married." This reaching Greuze's ears, he became less assiduous in his attentions, but it was too late—she held him fast.

He was living at that time in the Faubourg St. Germain, Rue du Petit Lion, Hôtel des Vignes. One afternoon he was startled by a loud knocking at his door. Suspecting something unusual, he kept quiet; but the knocks were followed by kicks and thumps. Dreading a scandal, he at last opened, only to find Mademoiselle Babuty, accompanied by her cook, outside, in tears.

What followed is easily guessed. Entreaties, tears, threats assailed him, till at last, overcome, he gave her a formal promise of marriage. Satisfied with this, she took her departure. Subsequent events are not very clear. She informed everyone that she was married to Greuze, and yet there is no trace of the ceremony having taken place till two years later, when they were married at St. Medard, Greuze choosing that town rather than Paris to avoid the jokes of his friends, who believed him to be already married.

Their means were small; between the two they had but thirty-six livres to start housekeeping upon. It is not surprising, therefore, if their

conjugal bliss was of short duration. At first we are told Madame Greuze was flattered by her husband's devotion and the admiration he evinced by the continuous reproduction of her features in different characters—"La mère bien aimée," "La Volupteuse," and several others. Indeed, his friends reproached him at this time with introducing her too frequently into his pictures. Before long, however, Madame Greuze tired of this humdrum life and sought amusement elsewhere. Her husband was engrossed with his art, and she did not care to disturb him, seeing she required all the money, and even more, than he could earn to defray the household and her own private expenses. She was no longer satisfied to do the work of the house, as was usual in their class of life, but arrogantly demanded that he should provide her with a servant. He begged her to wait until after Easter, having promised to pay certain debts which she had incurred by that date. So angry was she at this refusal that she struck him. Indeed, every month, every year, the misery of his home increased. To supply her fancies, she insisted on his working far more arduously than was good either for himself or his art. But to this he made no objection; his studio was to him an ark of refuge, to which he fled from his domestic troubles. So absorbed was he in his work that he let his own and his

children's interests drift into his wife's hands, until at last she managed all his money affairs, and if he ventured to remark that the accounts she gave him of receipts and expenditure were not correct, she answered him impatiently:

"You know nothing about it; I manage those things better than you do. Be off!" and he fled to his studio, where, brush in hand, he happily forgot all things else.

But at last he was roused to remonstrate when she quietly informed him she had lost 36,000 livres, which she had invested in a ship which the English had captured. Alas! he could never find out the name of the captain or anything about the ship. She further tore up all his receipts, so that he never knew what money he received.

"Why did you do that?" he expostulated.

"Because I chose to; I have no accounts to give you."

She interfered with his artistic life, with his pupils, with everything, in fact. She was an enemy in the household, added to which, her moral conduct was execrable. He shut his eyes to this as long as he could, but at last he could do so no more. They had two daughters; she refused to be troubled either with the care of their health or education. Their father placed them in a convent, where they remained—one eleven, the other twelve years. Their father

went to see them frequently, but their mother would allow a year, sometimes two years, to go by without visiting them, or having them home. Matters went on like this for a long time, till at last her conduct became so notorious that by the advice of his friends Greuze applied to the magistrates for a separation, which he obtained without difficulty. He settled an annuity of 1,350 livres upon her for life, and she left him. He lived alone until his daughters were old enough to keep house for him. Such are the two episodes of Greuze's life—the romance in Italy, and his unfortunate marriage. It will hardly be necessary to allude to either of them again; they become a dead letter in his life—the sweet and the bitter!

CHAPTER IV

"ZENITH"

Diderot, as a critic, alternately blames and praises Greuze—The philosopher's influence on the artist—"The Paralytic" makes a sensation—It interprets the philosophical regeneration of art in the school of morality—The state of French society in the eighteenth century—"The Village Betrothal"—The glorification of wedlock—Greuze, a schoolmaster, teaches the lesson of virtue rewarded and vice punished—The artificial element marks the early republican period—Greuze panders to it, and thus obtains considerable renown—Diderot will not suffer him to wander out of this groove—His pictures and portraits of this time are entirely in this spirit, and their success raised him to the zenith of public opinion.

WE have said that at one time Greuze failed to satisfy the taste of his friend Diderot, but at the Salon of 1761 he regained his good opinion, for Diderot writes to Grimm: "It seems as if Greuze had been once more hard at work. His portrait of Monsieur le Dauphin is a striking resemblance; his father-in-law is splendid." In the same Salon Greuze exhibited a portrait of himself, which once more irritated his rivals by its self-satisfied expression; also a portrait of

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THE BETROTHAL

Madame Greuze as a vestal, which caused Diderot to exclaim, "A vestal! Are you mocking us?"

Besides these pictures he had several charming heads of young girls and children on view. But the *chef-d'œuvre* of the year was a drawing called "The Paralytic Succoured by his Children," or "The Fruits of a Good Education." It was this picture which restored him to Diderot's favour. He had strayed for a time, but had once more returned to the philosopher's idea of the regeneration of art in the school of morality, therefore Diderot was unstinting in his praise of this picture.

"It proves," he said, "that a picture dealing with the morals of society can furnish subjects for composition capable of showing forth, not only the talents, but also the sentiments of the author." This drawing, which was afterwards painted, is to-day in Russia, in the Imperial Palace of the Hermitage.

His next picture made even a stronger impression, not only on Diderot, but on the general public. "The Village Betrothal" created a great sensation; all Paris raved about it. "It certainly is Greuze's best picture," declared Diderot; "it does him credit both as an artist and a man."

He himself saw in it the glorification of legitimate wedlock, and the encouragement of love in marriage. To fully enter into these sentiments,

it is necessary to remember the moral state of French society during Louis XV.'s reign.

Marriage was at a discount; illicit unions were the order of the day—at least, among the upper classes. Paris was a hotbed of vice: the provincial towns were tainted by it. The chateaux and their masters were, as a rule, the curse of the village maidens; only in the depths of the country, far away in solitary farmhouses, in villages which lay well off the highways, were love and marriage still reverenced; there alone the peasant girls could wear bridal wreaths of orange blossom without blushing. The original title of this famous picture was, "A Father Paying his Daughter's Dowry." The scene takes place in the one living-room of the house. It is the simplest of its kind; the fowls are as much at home there as the children. A staircase at the back leads to the upper storey; a plank for the bed; the old family gun suspended on the wall; a half-open cupboard; a few chairs; a table, at which the lawyer is seated—completes the interior. As is usual in Greuze's family groups, the figures are numerous. In this picture they are twelve in number. In the centre, forming a semicircle, are the principal personages—the old father giving his daughter's dowry in a leathern bag to the young man, who receives it with a certain humility, bending forward and listening attentively

to the exhortation which accompanies the gift. The *fiancée* has slipped one hand caressingly under his arm, whilst her mother holds the other, as if she were loth to let her daughter go. The girl's figure is pathetic: with bent eyes and blushing face she stands between the old and the new life—the old and the new loves. Around those figures others are cleverly grouped—brothers and sisters of all ages, in different attitudes of careless curiosity or affectionate interest. The fat baby has climbed on the notary's knee, and is doing his best to tear up the marriage contract. The whole *mise en scène* is charming, and unusually devoid of that affectation which so frequently mars Greuze's pictures. Indeed, the studied stiffness of his figures has been a frequent reproach, also his lack of imagination; he repeats himself. The venerable sire with long white hair is seldom absent in his composition, the dog never; but in this picture, as in many others, whatever his faults may be, he is unrivalled in his treatment of the young girls and the children, of the former especially. His colouring is simply exquisite; the delicate carnation, which never deepens into red; the soft firm roundness of perfect health; that wonderful rosebud freshness which belongs only to the maiden:

> "Standing with reluctant feet
> Where the brook and river meet."

Greuze may be considered to have attained the zenith of his success in 1763. Diderot, who had judged him so severely when he wandered ever so little from the school of moral painting, which it was his aim and object to cultivate, broke forth into a hymn of praise when "Filial Piety" or "The Fruits of a Good Education" was exhibited. No language, save his own, can give an idea of the enthusiasm with which he extolled this production. The "Village Betrothal" was nothing compared to it.

"Greuze," he exclaims, "is an artist after my own heart; his style satisfies me; it is moral picture-painting. The brush has been too long used to reproduce debauchery and vice; it is well to see it join hands with dramatic poetry, to arouse in our hearts hatred of vice and a love of virtue. Courage, my friend! Only continue to give us such practical lessons of morality—never weary of well-doing; then, when the hour comes for you to depart this life, you will remember all these productions of your genius with happy complacency. I wish you had been beside a young girl who was gazing enraptured at the head of your Paralytic. She suddenly broke forth, with charming vivacity, 'Ah, now! it touches me; if I look at him much longer I shall weep.'

"And I—I was tempted to wish that young girl

had been my own daughter. I almost recognised her as such, for I, too, when I looked at that eloquent and touching face, felt my soul melt within me, and tears fill my eyes."

No wonder if Greuze's naturally weak, vain-glorious nature was puffed up—he was over-whelmed by the enthusiastic favour of the people. This was in a great measure owing to the phase through which the French nation was at that time passing. A sort of epidemic of sensibility, or, rather, a sentimental tenderness, was the fashion, which found vent in exclamations and little cries of surprise and delight at the smallest display of virtue, as if it were a thing so rare and precious, by no means intended for daily use. Hands were thrown up with astonishment at the sight of fathers instructing their sons; mothers nursing their own babes were adored as saints; and the poor honest married women, who were satisfied if they could earn their daily bread, were extolled as marvels of virtue! The whole story of life was wound up on the principle of virtue rewarded and vice punished. An exaggerated admiration for heroism or self-sacrifice found expression in high-stilted artificial language. This lasted until the Revolution swept it away; but Robespierre and others of the same school practised it. Art, poetry, declamation were all impregnated with this artificial element. Greuze lent himself to it,

and received his meed in the plaudits of the public. He had conceived the idea of following the example of Hogarth, namely, of painting a series of pictures to illustrate the results of a good or bad education received in early life. "Basile and Thibaut," or "The Two Educations," were to consist of twenty-six pictures, and to end with the sentence of death pronounced on the murderer Thibaut by his virtuous friend Basile, who had risen to be Chief Magistrate in the Criminal Court. This idea was not carried out, and it is not to be regretted.

In the Louvre there are two pictures in what we might call this serial style, "The Malediction" and "The Punishment." The first represents a young man tearing himself out of his mother's arms, and away from the clinging hands of young brothers and sisters. In an armchair sits the father, unable to move from sickness, only his right hand is raised threateningly, and from his parted lips one divines that he is giving utterance to the terrible malediction. In the doorway, his hat upon his head, waits with careless indifference the recruiting sergeant: thus the story explains itself. The young man, in a fit of desperation, has enlisted against his father's wishes, and so has incurred his anger.

In the second picture the same personages reappear, but the old man is lying dead on his bed,



INNOCENCE

surrounded by his children in every attitude of despair. At the open door stands the prodigal son, bowed in shame and sorrow before his father's corpse. He has arrived too late! His mother at the foot of the bed, in a somewhat theatrical pose, points to the dead man, and the words, "Thou art the murderer!" seem to proceed from her lips.

Both these pictures received an ovation. The reason of their success lay in Greuze's sympathetic nature. He thought out and loved his subjects as a man and an artist. If we would but realise it, this is the secret of the success of all popular writers and artists. "A touch of nature makes the whole world akin." Greuze neglected nothing to attain this end. One feels that his brush lingers lovingly over the smallest detail. Everything has been thought out, everything has been felt—so he won hearts. If his pictures are less appreciated to-day than on their first appearance, the reason is surely because the lessons he taught are not applicable to the present day.

> "Old times are changed,
> Old manners gone."

Their *raison d'être* ceased with the eighteenth century, but his portraits and heads of girls and children, and his sketches, are more highly appreciated now than in the days when they came fresh from the painter's palette.

Their great charm lies in the fact that they are purely artistic; they aim at giving us no lesson; they are simply charming, beguiling to the eye, and seductive to the senses, as a thing of beauty must always be. So we admire Greuze, and recognise the fact that his pictures have an intrinsic value all their own.

CHAPTER V

A FAILURE

Greuze at war with the Academy—Education a necessity for an historical painter—Greuze utterly at fault, delays to paint his academical picture—When he does, it proves a complete failure—Difficulty of the jury to accept or refuse it—They compromise by receiving him as a "Peintre de genre," and on the strength of his past work—Greuze is deeply offended, argues with the jury—He leaves Paris, and refuses to exhibit at the Salon—His inordinate vanity—He throws open his studio to the public, declaring that there alone is true art to be found—Personal character—Unpopularity as a man—His domestic unhappiness reacts upon his works—His resentment to criticism, and the heed he paid to his wife's remarks—Discourtesy his worst enemy—He offends the Dauphin—Wille, the engraver, and Diderot his best friends—Lack of imagination: he painted what he saw or had seen.

COMPARATIVELY early in his artistic career Greuze was "agréé" by the Academy, but this entailed his painting a picture for the nation before he was received as a member, and his disinclination to carry out this official order got him into trouble. He was suspended, and not allowed to exhibit at the annual Salon. This angered him greatly, but he still deferred fulfilling the order. Historical painting was not in his line; he was

not educated up to that point which makes history a romance, and therefore picturesque.

Whenever Greuze swerved from what was familiar to his eyes and senses he failed. He was true when he was simple, sublime when he was unaffected, but utterly incapable of historical painting. He was essentially the artist for women, tearful and slender, and of children's cherub faces. For him, therefore, to attempt such a subject as Septimus Severus reproaching his son with seeking to take his life in the defiles of Scotland was pure folly. The Roman figures are hopelessly stiff and unsympathetic; the classical dresses fall in straight inartistic folds. Septimus Severus has no nobility either in his person or his gesture; his skin is black and unpleasing. There are also grave faults of drawing; the posture of the leg under the coverlet is, to say the least of it, awkward. Caracalla is even worse than his father—a figure of wood with no movement in it. It is not to be wondered at, therefore, if the academical jury found some difficulty in pronouncing a verdict in his favour. They were puzzled how to act. Greuze was at this time a personality; if they refused him membership, it would be attributed to jealousy. For upwards of an hour they were closeted, discussing how to solve the position. That the picture was inferior, indeed bad, there was but one opinion.

It would be difficult to define Greuze's feelings as he waited in the adjoining room for the verdict. His vanity and self-approbation were so great that he did not conceive it possible he could be refused. One can imagine his astonishment when he was summoned before the jury. The Director, Mons. Lemoyne, speaking seriously and somewhat coldly, said:

"Monsieur, the Academy receives you as a member, but as 'peintre de genre,' and in consideration of your former productions, which are excellent. We shut our eyes to the one before us, which is neither worthy of you or of the Academy."

Greuze's anger was great; he protested, and sought to prove that his picture was excellent; but his remarks were received in silence, or with smiles, which were doubly irritating.

What was especially galling in this verdict was that by it he lost certain privileges which belonged by right to historical painters—a fellowship, and other public functions. So persistent was he in his self-defence that one of the members, Lagrènée, took his pencil and was about to mark off on the canvas the incorrectness of the figures, but he was stopped, and the incident was allowed to pass. Greuze's anger was such that he declined to become a member. "His Majesty has ordered you to do so," he was told; and reluctantly he took the oath, but, in revenge, he refused to

exhibit at the Salon, left Paris, and went to live at Anjou. He never exhibited at the Salon again until he was an old man, and the Revolution had swept his enemies away. When he returned, the following year, to Paris, he threw open his own studio on certain days, declaring that there alone pictures worth looking at were to be seen, and the public crowded to his exhibition.

Probably there have been few artists so disliked, as a man, as Greuze was. His personal character was detestable, rendered so by his inordinate vanity. He could not brook a disparaging remark; his irritability and pride were unbounded. A lady venturing to criticise something in his picture of "La mère bien aimée," he flew into a passion. "She had better be careful," he said, "or I shall immortalise her as a schoolmistress; with a whip in her hand, she shall be a terror to all children now and in the future."

His adoration of his own genius and his own productions was inextinguishable. Nothing affected him, neither irony nor ridicule.

"That is a beautiful picture," said Monsieur de Marigny, alluding to "La Pleureuse."

"I know it is, and yet I want work," answered Greuze.

"You have enemies," said Vernet, who was

present; "one especially, who appears to adore you, and nevertheless will ruin you."

"Who is that?" asked Greuze carelessly.

"Yourself!" answered Vernet.

But Vernet was wrong. Genius exonerated the man, and won his pardon for offences which, in ordinary mortals, would have been unpardonable. His temperament had to be taken into account, it was urged; his inspiration, the absorption of his art, in which he absolutely lived, body and soul! Such a man could not be judged by the ordinary scale of humanity. When, in the evening, he appeared in society, the result of his morning's work was reflected in his face—he was sad or gay, according to how he was satisfied with his work; for this reason, his humours were endured, and every excuse made for him.

Diderot laid the blame of the failure of his academical picture to the misery of his home life. There was as yet no separation. Madame Greuze worried the life out of him. She would make sudden apparitions in his studio, insisting upon alterations in his work, until it frequently happened, that he threw both palette and brush down in despair, and left the house. It seems almost incomprehensible that he should have endured this interference, but, as we have said before, an artist's nature is complex, the influences which bear upon it, unaccountable. Inherent

unsatisfied desire to attain a higher degree of perfection is the greatest incentive to progress. To be satisfied with what we have attained is fatal. To be dissatisfied, to listen to every breath of blame or praise, to weigh the "pros" and "cons" of every judgment, may be pain—nay, almost torture—to sensitive souls, but to those who are strong enough to face it, it will prove a tonic, enabling them to do better work and to rise higher toward perfection. Many have succumbed beneath the critic's whipcord; others have lifted up their voices and, figuratively, wept, forgetful of the poet's definition of a true man: "To suffer and be strong."

We have seen how Greuze resented the criticism of the Academy, and yet he paid heed to a comparatively ignorant woman, and altered and painted and repainted at her desire. The habit came to him probably in the early days of their married life, when love was in the ascendant, for at that time Greuze is said to have adored his wife, and to have worked willingly by day and by night to satisfy her desires. That he failed to do so was no fault of his, for, until her unfaithfulness and her many vices became evident, her power over him was unbounded, and he made but feeble attempts to shake off her influence. Unfortunate in his dealings with the Academy, he had still worse luck in official circles, yet his chances of

promotion were of the best; but it was his want of tact which injured him—he was essentially his own enemy. Sent for to Versailles to paint the portrait of the Dauphin, he did so with such satisfactory results that the Prince was delighted, and asked him to paint the Dauphiness. To this request he answered coarsely, that he "could not paint such heads." This was an allusion to the rouge which the Dauphiness used to excess, as many women of that day did.

His portrait of his friend, the engraver Wille, was a speaking likeness, and won him great praise; the carefully executed, exquisite lace jabot and cuffs, contrasting with the red cheeks, were much admired.

"I should like to see it side by side with a Rubens, a Rembrandt, or a Vandyck," writes his faithful admirer, Diderot; "at least, then we should be able to judge what our friend gains or loses by the comparison."

Greuze's subjects have all a certain resemblance one to the other. They consist mostly of domestic incidents, something broken, lost, or flown away, such as "The Broken Mirror," "The Basket of Broken Eggs." The first represents a young woman at her toilet table, from which, by some means or other, the looking-glass has fallen to the ground, and lies at her feet in two broken pieces. Her despair is evident; she is all but

wringing her hands, and the expression of the face is melancholy in the extreme. She is probably somewhat superstitious, and is reflecting upon what misfortune the breaking of the mirror portends. The accessories are, as usual, numerous; in the foreground is the inevitable dog, curious yet alarmed at the noise of the fall, not daring to approach yet longing to examine the mischief. The drawer is half open; strings of beads have been brought forth; a powder-puff and other articles of toilet are strewn about, and behind, on a sideboard, is a guttering candle, a kettle, and a bowl—the whole forming a complete interior, perfect in every detail.

Another picture of the same period is "The Dead Bird"; a young girl leaning on an empty cage, on the top of which, lying on its back, showing all its soft-coloured breast plumage, is the dead favourite. The attitude of the girl is stiff; one feels she is posing; the carefully bared neck and arm; the flowers in her bosom trailing over the cage—are all prepared, thought out, like a stage effect: it does not appeal to the senses. The sentiment is there, but without the soul; it is cold in itself, and leaves the onlooker cold.

This is the case with many of Greuze's pictures. He had little, if any, imagination; his pictures were a faithful representation of what he saw or



THE DEAD BIRD

had seen. He carried this to excess, especially in some of his portraits; instead of softening certain blemishes, which he might well have done without marring the likeness, he accentuated them, meaning to be exact to nature, until it was decidedly unpleasant. It was doubtless for this reason that he excelled most in his portraits of girls and children. There was nothing to hide or smear over in those young faces; he could let his brush linger lovingly on the fair white forehead, the delicately rounded cheek, the soft modulations of throat and bosom; and he did so till the effect was almost amorous.

CHAPTER VI

A FRIEND IN NEED

His unpopularity deprived Greuze of public favours—Diderot takes up the cudgels for him—The reason why Court painters were lodged in the royal palaces — Greuze always in need of money—Creates a society for the sale of engravings—The moral character of his pictures have thus a success—How and why he tided over the revolutionary period with less suffering than his fellow artists—Greuze a pedagogue and a pauper — The Emperor of Austria, Joseph II., visits Greuze's studio—Compliments him and rewards him liberally, bestowing on him the title of Baron —Flattery the elixir of life to Greuze.

GREUZE'S personal unpopularity at Court and in official circles was a reason why he received few honours and immunities. He was already celebrated, and his studio a fashionable resort for loungers, before he was the object of any public mark of favour. He had no pension, and not even as a Court painter, had the privilege of a lodging at the Louvre been accorded him. Not unnaturally, he felt this neglect keenly, and his friend Diderot took up the cudgels for him with a sarcasm which was worthy of the philosopher. He wrote thus :

"The following is the list of honours which Monsieur le Directeur of the arts and sciences has caused to be bestowed upon Monsieur Greuze. When his talent as a painter was recognised he was permitted to take a journey to Rome at his own expense, and when he had spent all the money he had saved, at great personal sacrifice, for this purpose, he was graciously allowed to return to Paris. Too soon, alas! for him to reap the benefit of his travels, at least, to the extent he had hoped to do. Since his return he has been permitted to paint the most beautiful pictures, and to sell them as best he could!"

After the great success of his picture, "The Paralytique," exhibited at the last Salon, he was allowed to take it to Versailles, and to exhibit it before the King and the Royal Family. The journey cost him twenty crowns, and had no good results from it. Indeed, the picture cost him in models and studies two hundred louis, and he found no purchaser for it. As a further favour he at last received permission to sell it to the Academy of Arts at St. Petersburg, with the view of extending his reputation to the furthest limits of Europe.

As painter to the King and member of the Academy, he was completely under Government control, and obliged to exhibit to order. Each of these exhibitions, Greuze declared, deprived him

of a year's private orders. It was for this reason that pensions were accorded, and residences at the Louvre, or any other royal palace, given to Court painters. Greuze obtained a lodging at the Louvre on the 6th March, 1769. He retained it until 1780, when he gave in his resignation, and took up his residence in the Rue Sorbonne.

Though at one time Greuze sold his pictures at a high price, he seems, nevertheless, to have been always more or less in the want of money, even after his separation from his wife. As a sort of speculation, he formed a society for the sale of engravings. The moral character of his pictures made this a success. Like good books, which can be placed in every hand, so these moral picture-lessons might hang on any wall, to the edification of the small folk of the faubourgs. Their price was comparatively small, and the subjects highly appreciated. "The Prodigal Son" became a byword to children for more than twenty years; "Eat thy soup, or thou wilt end badly like the Prodigal Son" was a menace which mothers were never tired of throwing at their recalcitrant offspring. It is asserted that this school of engraving brought Greuze in as much as three hundred thousand livres. For this purpose he gathered round him the best engravers in France, such as Flippart, a pupil of Cars, who engraved the following pictures: "The Village

Betrothal" and "The Twelfth Night Cake." So numerous were those productions that they spread rapidly over town and country, and are to be found to-day in almost any second-hand shop.

One portrait which he painted at this time deserves especial mention, because it differed from his usual style, which was generally taken from the middle class. But this picture represents a great lady, probably one of those destined only too soon to pay the penalty of her gentle birth on the scaffold; this lady was Madame la Marquise de Chauvelin. It was a mistake for Greuze ever to paint the portraits of men—he might produce a good and striking likeness, but he failed entirely in position and in colouring, which was invariably sombre; and the pose was always stiff, sometimes heavy and grotesque. Contrariwise, as soon as he touches a woman's face he is in his element; his eye and his hand bespeak the master. In this famous picture the Marquise is dressed in white satin; she is represented full face, her pretty head bent forward, her hair slightly powdered. All the details are charming—the favourite lapdog, the soft fur trimming, the highly decorated tambourine. Evidently the model inspired the artist, possibly for the very reason that it was so different from his ordinary work. Greuze made it a point of honour to

show himself at his best. He has caught the expression of the smiling lips, the questioning eyes, and his colouring is, as in all his female pictures, faultless. This picture is not in the Louvre, but a facsimile is to be seen in the collection of Monsieur Alphonse de Rothschild. The original was sold in 1877 for the sum of 70,020 francs at the sale of Monsieur D'Imecourt. During the Revolution he painted several portraits of the revolutionary leaders. Gensonné and Fabre D'Eglantine, are in the "La Caze" Collection. He also painted Danton, Dumouriez, Josephine Beauharnais, and Napoleon Bonaparte.

It is evident by this that he passed through troublesome times with less difficulty than many other fellow-artists. He had attached himself to no party; he had offended royalty, and had quarrelled with the Academy, so that when both were wrecked he remained untouched, an old man, poor and still dependent upon his brush as when he first trod the streets of Paris seeking his fortune. If few artists perished on the guillotine, it was precisely for this very reason that they adapted themselves to the times. They painted to order, whether it was by royal command or for the Committee of Public Safety. It was a case of daily bread. Prudhon, less fortunate than Greuze, was driven out of Paris, and with that facility for which he was famous, and which was,



THE BROKEN PITCHER

indeed, the distinctive mark of the century, he turned his hand to any style of drawing or painting by means of which he might keep the wolf from the door.

A pedagogue and a pauper! When Greuze steps down from his pulpit and becomes a man like other men, then only is he natural, then only is he master of his art. He is often stilted and pretentious. He has a knack of unnecessarily displaying the bare shoulder or the bosom but slightly veiled—if veiled at all. Women and girls —especially in the class from which he took his models—do not thrust their kerchiefs on one side. It may, and doubtless is, artistic, but not natural. This is especially noticeable in his much-admired picture of "La Cruche Cassée"—a little innocent girl, with wide-open eyes full of astonishment, fresh as a rosebud and as fragile, would scarcely have gone to the public fountain in such complete dishabille. The famous Madame Roland, at that time Mademoiselle Phillipon, followed the fashionable crowd to Greuze's studio, and in writing to a friend she mentions this very picture:

"I might reproach Monsieur Greuze with the grey colouring he affects, but to-day he showed me a picture quite different to his usual productions, and which completely unarmed my criticism. It represents a little girl — simple, fresh, and charming—who has just broken her jug at the

fountain. She still has it on her arm. The expression in her eyes, and her half-opened mouth, is one of astonishment. Her person is piquant and pretty. The only fault to be found with it is that she does not look sorry enough for her accident, to prevent her returning to the fountain. I told Monsieur Greuze this, and we both laughed!"

This picture won much praise, and was exceedingly popular. His studio was crowded to overflowing with visitors. Even royalties were not lacking. The Emperor of Austria, Joseph II., complimented him. He was travelling incognito under the name of Conte de Falkenstein, visited Greuze's studio, and was so extremely amiable that the artist was puffed up with pride.

"Have you been to Italy, sir?" asked the Emperor.

"I lived there two years, Monsieur le Conte," he answered.

"And you learnt nothing—your style is your own—you are the poet of your own pictures."

Such flattery was the elixir of life to Greuze, as it is to many; but what was more to the purpose, the Emperor added a substantial proof of his admiration of the artist by sending him the diploma of a baron and 4,000 ducats. Few of the visits paid to his studio were as remunerative. Alas! how soon we are forgotten. Others step

into our shoes, and before we are aware of it, our place knows us no more. By keeping an open studio Greuze strove to avoid this, and to keep himself before the public. He was a wise man in his generation.

CHAPTER VII

CRITICS

Greuze a copyist—The influence of Boucher: he borrowed his subjects and adapted them as his own moral style, adding to and taking from as suited him—The monotony of his pictures—The sale of Greuze's pictures in England and Germany during the Revolution—His genre pictures preferable to his moral subjects—The artificial element which pervades many of them the result of the atmosphere in which he lived.

IT is an accepted fact that Greuze was lacking in imagination; he could paint what he saw, what was essentially familiar to him; but it is not generally known that several of his pictures were borrowed from Boucher. The subject was the same, though the treatment might be somewhat different. This is especially noticeable in "The Village Betrothal," which Boucher actually painted, only he represented the betrothed giving her own dowry to her future husband, whereas Greuze represents the old father giving both the betrothed his daughter's dowry and to the young man a lecture into the bargain! There is also a touch of allegory in this picture, which did not exist in Boucher's, and which caused it to be a

ten days' triumph. In the foreground is a hen with her chickens busily engaged in scratching up food for her young; the idea was considered a marvel of ingenuity. The subject was so highly appreciated that the public shut its eyes to the imperfect execution and to the want of harmony in the colouring. This was Greuze's luck.

Two other pictures of Boucher's served him as models. A young woman leaning on a table with a dog on her lap. The interior of a room; a woman playing on a spinette, two men accompanying her on violin and flute, whilst a child is amusing itself on the ground with a little dog.

There is hardly a picture by Greuze, at least, not an ensemble picture, in which this dog is absent. It may be of different breeds and different proportions, but it is always there. Even in his pictures of children, in which there is no positive subject, he introduces with effect animal life, and they are all the more charming.

"Innocence" has a lamb in her arms. Then there is an exquisite head of a child with a little King Charles.

These isolated subjects were wonderfully simple in their conception and execution. A little child leaning with her fat chubby arms on a table, on which, just in front of her, is a rosy apple; the pose, the expression, the colouring are

perfect; it would be impossible to pass it by unnoticed.

"La Petite Boudeuse" (the sulky child) is inimitable. There is the plate of food before her, which evidently does not please her, and which, with eyes half averted, she refuses even to see; the face is stolid, the expression is distinctly "I won't!"

"The Listening Girl" is particularly fascinating. It belonged to the Hertford Collection, and is now to be seen in the Wallace Gallery. The short curly hair which frames the face, the hand raised to the ear, the listening eyes, and half-open mouth, tell their own story.

"Innocence," holding two pigeons, has been esteemed as one of his best paintings. It is also in the Wallace Gallery, but it has a curious history, and passed through many hands before it reached its final destination. Greuze received originally from Mr. Wilkinson 4,500 francs for it; Mr. Wilkinson sold it for 248 guineas! It then passed into the hands of Mr. Wells, of Redleaf, who in his turn sold it to the Marquis of Hertford for £787 10*s*. It is now the property of the nation.

England is particularly rich in the possession of pictures by this artist. During the period of, and after, the Revolution, many notable pictures were sold from France, and English connoisseurs



A YOUNG GIRL.

have always been highly appreciative of Greuze's genius.

Germany possesses many *chefs-d'œuvre* in the art galleries of Berlin, Leipzig, Karlsruhe, Munich, and Metz. One particularly, "La Belle Blanchisseuse," is in the private collection of Count von Wachmeister. This picture has met, and not undeservedly, with severe criticism. She is, as the children would say, "a play washerwoman." A most absurdly small basin placed on the ground is the only utensil in use, if we except a sort of pot, which would certainly not hold a gallon of water. Seated on a stool, the girl holds an article of clothing in her hands, and makes seeming to wash, looking vacantly in the opposite direction. Any girl might pose after this fashion, but no washerwoman! This fault of unnaturalness has been frequently commented upon. Greuze aimed at making a picture, and either did not know how to, or would not, make poverty and rags picturesque.

He is at his best in the picture of the girl winding wool, "La Pelotonneuse." She is a peasant, such as may be seen any day in a comfortable farmhouse in France. The expression of the girl's face and the kitten's are both excellent—the one reproving, the other mischievous as it catches at the wool and holds it firmly between its crossed paws. The girl's hands are also good.

These genre pictures are decidedly preferable to his moral subjects, which, however good they may be as lessons, are always more or less artificial. Their colouring also is often faulty. Greuze was too fond of browns and violets, which cast like a shadow over his picture.

We must not omit to mention one other picture of this class, and which seems to unite alike all the qualities and faults we have indicated, but at the same time it is certainly one of his most attractive pictures, namely, "The Milkmaid." First of all, the dress is charming, the pose and expression equally so, but it is more the portrait of one of the great ladies playing at being a milkmaid, at Queen Marie Antoinette's Trianon, than of a real milkmaid.

It were well to remember, in dwelling upon this artificial element, that it was characteristic of the times when Greuze was at his zenith, in the reign of Louis XVI. Nothing was real, everything had a false ring in it, men and woman alike simulated virtue and simplicity. Life was a daily, nay, an hourly, masquerade. For this reason Greuze's pictures were destined, for a time at least, to be swept away by the rude realistic horrors of the Revolution. We must not, therefore, be hard upon Greuze on account of the atmosphere in which he lived; he could not be, or do, otherwise; and certainly had he tried, he would not

have been appreciated. Boucher was equally artificial in a different way; his were the amorous days of Louis XV. Flowers, cupids, Venuses, to please the Pompadours and du Barrys of a pleasure-loving monarch; such was his destiny.

CHAPTER VIII

PORTRAITS

Greuze as a portrait-painter—His colouring defective, especially in his portraits of men—He is more successful with females and children—His browns and greys objected to—As he grew older this became more evident, as also the artificial poses of his personages—Watteau and Boucher represent decorative art—Greuze interprets human sentiments, and strives to appeal to the emotions—The charm of his women —The admiration excited by the etchings of his pictures prepared by G. M. Morse.

DURING the first years of his married life, whilst the glamour of passion was upon him, Greuze was never tired of painting his wife; indeed, her features are to be traced in many of his pictures.

The most remarkable portrait of this lady is that in which she is represented under the title of "Philosophy Asleep." If it were not for the books piled up around her, across which she has thrown her arm, the better title would have been "The Voluptuary." The large, loosely clad body, the head tossed back upon the pillow, the abandonment of the whole figure—even the fat dog stretched on its mistress's lap, with its head rest-

ing on her arm—conveys no idea of philosophy or learning. The whole get-up is incongruous, even to the tambourine and the balls of wool lying at the lady's feet. It has truly been said that this picture is typical of the eighteenth century, a strange medley of ideas and objects, having no connection one with the other.

In the Salon of 1769 Greuze had two important portraits—one of the Hereditary Prince of Saxe-Gotha, the other of the popular painter, Etienne Jeaurat. This last is in the Louvre. Jeaurat painted scenes in the markets, criers in the streets, all the familiar personages of a great city. Diderot writing of him at this time says :—

"He has a claim to our indulgence, for he is getting old. He has grey hair, and a long good-natured face." It is thus Greuze has represented him. He was seventy years of age, but his eyes were still bright and penetrating, from the habit he had of examining persons and things. It is a conscientious portrait. Its great fault is its colouring, which is sombre and uninteresting. Indeed, the backgrounds of most of Greuze's pictures, and his colouring of this class of picture especially, have been found great fault with. There is an opaqueness in them, and the tints are dull. He affected especially browns and greys, which lack brilliancy, and which cast a shade of grimness over many of his portraits.

It is evident, from the subjects of his different pictures, that Greuze has a marked predilection for female portraiture. He was therefore particularly successful in that line, so much so, that a well-known critic, Théophile Gautier, says of him:

"His women are charming; he has the knack of representing living, breathing, loving creatures. Beauty is a necessity with Greuze, ugliness an impossibility. If he were to attempt to paint it, he would make it attractive. His ideal is not the pure classical Greek beauty, nor the calm serenity of Raphael's Madonnas, but the pretty French girl, fresh, piquante, coquettish, with an appearance of innocence and rustic grace, something between the grisette and the peasant, wholly charming, a type of his own creation."

It were impossible to express in words the admiration excited by that phase of Greuze's art exemplified by the etchings prepared by G. M. Morse from pictures which were formerly in the possession of Prince Demidoff, and were well known as the San Donato Gallery, which was dispersed by auction in February, 1870. These plates attracted a great number of connoisseurs, and realised enormous prices. At this same sale other productions of Greuze were the subject of most energetic biddings. The names of these works, and the prices obtained for them, are among the curiosities of the sale-room:—



THE KISS

"Les Œufs Cassés"	sold for	5,040 francs
"Le Geste Napolitain"	,,	2,120 guineas
"Flori"	,,	720 ,,
"Le Favori"	,,	1,400 ,,
"Bacchante"	,,	2,320 ,,
"La Petite Fille au Chien"	,,	3,560 ,,
"L'Etude"	,,	800 ,,
"La Matin"	,,	380 ,,
"L'Effroi"	,,	448 ,,
"L'Enfant à la Pomme"	,,	1,240 ,,
"Bacchante à l'Amphore"	,,	700 ,,
"Le Petit Paysan"	,,	400 ,,
"Pudeur"	,,	748 ,,
"Malice"	,,	804 ,,
"Rêveuse"	,,	1,160 ,,
"La Volupté"	,,	1,240 ,,
"L'Espagnole"	,,	252 ,,
"Les Suppliantes"	,,	408 ,,

Never was there such a display of pictures, which, under a veil of modesty, exhibited a voluptuousness which was the more evident by their affectation of purity. It has been said of many of these girls that they look innocent in the *Greuzian* sense of the term. Two engraved pictures belong to Earl Dudley, and were exhibited, with several of those enumerated above, in the Royal Academy Winter Exhibition of 1871, numbered 397.

The late Marquis of Hertford, an energetic collector, bought "Les Œufs Cassés" for more than 5,000 guineas, and this picture, with the

following works, all by Greuze, are now, by the generosity of Sir R. Wallace, in the Bethnal Green Museum: "Girl Reading a Letter," "Day Dreams," "Filial Piety," "Head of a Bacchante," "A Portrait," "Sophie Arnauld," "A Girl's Head," "Fidelity," "A Magdalen," "The Broken Mirror," "Girl with Doves," "Female Head," "Female Portraits," "Girl's Head."

The admirers of Greuze may be congratulated in having thus the opportunity of studying the master, afforded them by this list of seventeen pictures.

CHAPTER IX

OLD AGE

Greuze during the period of the Revolution—His picture "L'Effroi"—The effect of politics on art—His downfall—Poverty and old age—His rival David—He obtains a pension—His peasant nature—Old pupils faithful to the last—Mademoiselle Mayer—The wreath of immortelles.

WE have seen how Greuze accommodated himself to the different political phases through which France passed. He even tided over those terrible years of terror when the streets literally ran with blood. It was probably at this time that he painted a picture of fear, "L'Effroi." It represents a young girl, her hair dishevelled, her eyes almost starting out of her head, her lips parted as if she were suppressing a cry; her nostrils are open, the whole figure is palpitating; the figure with clasped hands is, as it were, drawing back from some danger. How often must he have seen such a face as he wandered through the streets of Paris, when the tumbrils with their ghastly burdens were rolling towards

the Place de la Bastille? Notwithstanding his complaisance, he, like others, found it difficult to live through these years. Revolutions are by no means conducive to wealth; the doing away with luxuries checks the labour market, and men and women are alike thrown out of work. Politics and art do not easily amalgamate; on the contrary, they are separated by a deep chasm, difficult to bridge over. Greuze was destined to realise all this, and the result was bitter deception. Gradually the public taste changed; his hand had lost its cunning, but his industry was as great as ever. But suddenly he ceased to be the fashion; his pictures were out of date. David, the historical painter, was triumphant, and his bolder talent threw his predecessors into the background.

Greuze at one time received large sums of money for his pictures, but artists are, as a rule, improvident, and the money he earned slipped through his fingers. His wife was also in a great measure responsible for this; he had for many years allowed her to be mistress of everything, and she had spent and speculated and gambled away considerable sums of money. When he became aware of these facts, he had already lost nearly his entire fortune, and was getting old.

It is curious to note the sudden change in the world's estimate of the talents of a man who had



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but lately been exalted above his real merit and who suddenly falls below it. He hears himself spoken of in disparaging terms as "Greuze, an old man, who came after Boucher. His colouring is not true, and his drawing lacks purity of outline. David has so accustomed us to purity of outline that we expect to find it in everyone who aims at artistic value. Greuze's merit lies in the simplicity of his compositions; they are also not wanting in a certain character of their own."

Notwithstanding this unfavourable criticism of work which had been previously so extolled, Greuze had the courage to work on to the bitter end, when success had forsaken him. The very same year in which the above slur was cast upon his talents, he wrote:—

"I have lost everything except talent and courage. I am seventy-five years of age, and I have not a single order. In all my life I have never passed through such a hard time."

In July, 1792, he, however, obtained a pension of 1,537 livres, awarded him as a national recompense; also the honour conferred on him of having some of his pictures of domestic felicity exposed at the great public festival of the Convention.

Greuze probably owed the tenacity with which, at such an advanced age, he was able to struggle against adversity to his origin and his education.

He had roughed it as the slater's son, and he did not shrink from hardships when his hair was white and his back bent. In these latter days of sadness, when the waning hours of a long life were drawing to an end, a group of old pupils still remained faithful to their beloved master. It is almost superfluous to say that they were for the most part women. It is always the same story. Round the forsaken and desolate man a little circle of women gathered, consoling him with their tender flattery and their unstinted admiration. He was ever to them their dear master, unequalled before or after. They spent hours working obediently under his direction in the now empty studio, which had once upon a time been crowded with all the *élite* of Parisian society. Never probably, even during the height of his popularity, had he been listened to with such deferential attention. The ladies who thus comforted the painter's declining years were his daughter Anna, his god-daughter Caroline (afterwards Madame Valori, to whom we owe the few reminiscences of Greuze which have come down to us), Madame Jubot, Mlle. Ledoux, and Mlle. Mayer.

The last lady was remarkably talented. There are still two pictures of hers in the Louvre, but round her name there lingers one of those sad stories of a woman's weakness, and her hapless

end cast a deep shadow over the last years of Greuze's life. She had become deeply attached to the artist Prudhon, and he fully reciprocated her affection. For some years their friendship was a source of happiness and assistance to both, but little by little a deep-seated jealousy took possession of Mlle. Mayer. It ended in self-destruction. Life had become insupportable to her, and she closed the chapter, regardless of the suffering she inflicted on the man who had been for many years her companion. Prudhon never recovered the horror of her death, but dragged on a melancholy existence, touching up her pictures, trying to surround her name with an aureole of glory, and dying at last a lonely, disappointed man. Greuze was also deeply affected by her sad end, but within a few months he was destined to bid farewell to a world in which he had experienced such varied fortunes.

He died in 1806, and his friend and pupil, Madame Jubot, placed upon his coffin a wreath of immortelles, attached to which was the following inscription :—

"These flowers are the grateful offerings of his pupils to their beloved master, and are an emblem of his everlasting glory."

CHAPTER X

IMMORTALITY

The summing up of Greuze's good points, and the defects of style and colouring attributed to him—His mode of working and his advice to students—Conversation between Diderot and Latour—Lack of imagination, talent for composition—Essentially a painter of women, girls, and children—Will live in posterity as such—Flemish and Dutch schools—His position in art between David and Boucher.

AFTER death comes judgment. Not immediately can a true estimate of the artist be formed. A certain length of time must elapse before opinions settle down, before likes, dislikes, and prejudices are sifted: then only can the true value of the artist become evident.

We have seen how at one time Greuze was the height of fashion. In those years which mark a period in art, namely, between Boucher and David, his works were estimated over and above their real merit; but even then, notwithstanding the enthusiastic admiration which surrounded him, there were those, even among his admirers, who were keenly alive to the artist's defects, and predicted the ups and downs in public favour

which he would, in consequence, be subject to. Taken separately, these defects might escape observation, but they are numerous when massed together; it may be well, therefore, to notice them *en masse*. First, the monotony of his subjects, which always more or less ran in the same groove. A dead bird, a broken jar, an accident of some sort or other; a dog is invariably present, whether necessary or not; and in his family groups the figures are too crowded together—so much for his lack of imagination. Secondly, we have noticed more than once the want of ease and naturalness in the pose of his personages. Whether necessary or not, he so manages that his women shall display a hand or an arm; a kerchief is unnecessarily pushed on one side to display the rounded contour of the neck and the bosom—everything is studied for effect. Thirdly, his draperies are especially faulty; he himself confesses that he merely looked upon them as accessories, and they served him only so far as they enhanced the brilliancy of his flesh tints. The great art critic, Charles Blanc, will not allow that this reason can hold good in real art; he avers, further, that it fails in its very object, because when neglect of the drapery is so marked as to be incorrect, it attracts attention by its very inferiority, and this to the detriment of what is really worth looking at in the picture.

Fourthly, the lighting up of his pictures has always been the subject of severe criticism. It was the general opinion that it was too uniform; his whites lack purity, and once again his draperies come in faulty by their metallic appearance.

In a note addressed to Decreux we learn something of his manner of working, by which he produced his best effects. "Let your work be as finished as you possibly can make it," he writes; "try to get the effect at once, and never fear working it up. Let your backgrounds be laid on thickly, but in contradistinction; let your gauzes and laces be light. Be smart if you cannot be true. Never, if possible, make your heads larger or smaller than nature. Paint and draw as much as you possibly can from memory, especially landscapes, studying harmony of design and colouring." This advice, taken as a whole, was good, but Greuze did not always carry it out himself.

It is doubtful whether any other artist was as much discussed in his lifetime as it fell to Greuze's lot to be. There is a story told of a conversation which took place between Diderot and the great pastellist, La Tour, which the former relates in the following words:—

"La Tour was working; I was resting myself, and therefore took the opportunity of questioning him.

"'What reason can you assume,' I said, 'why

Greuze in that exquisite picture of "The Little Girl and the Black Dog," in which he displays to perfection his talent for flesh tints, has entirely failed in painting a bit of white linen for the sleeve of the chemise which covers the girl's arm? It is absolutely, to my eyes, nothing more than a bit of stone, furrowed to represent folds.'

"'That is the result of education,' answered La Tour. 'This defect may be seen in many other forms, far more essential. Children are taught primarily to attempt the embellishment of nature, instead of reproducing it with scrupulous exactitude. They are carried away with this idea, and then, when it becomes absolutely necessary to be exact in little details, they utterly fail.'

"'What do you mean by embellishing nature?' I asked.

"He thought for a moment and then answered: 'The professors of our school have committed two grave errors. In their teaching they have gone to extremes both ways: either their pupils become slaves to the compass and the ruler, and thus have become, and remain, false and cold in their productions, or else give themselves over to their imaginations, studying no rule, and are consequently equally false in the long run. This last is Greuze's fault: he was naturally, and has remained, artificial. His moral subjects were popular because they represented a passing phase

of the public mind, which no longer exists, but has become a matter of history. The result of this is that he is absolutely artificial. The framework and the idea of his pictures are good, but the personages are unreal. I can well imagine that the great ladies of the emigration who became milliners, cooks, etc., resembled the figures represented by Greuze, but they are not *real* milkmaids,'" etc.

No artist ever repeated himself as much as Greuze has done, and this is the greatest proof we can give of the sterility of his imagination. All his young girls belong to one family—fair or dark, with a blue ribbon in their hair, or a bunch of flowers in their bosoms — they are unmistakably sisters. But if he fails in imagination, he has a rare talent for composition, which is, it is needless to say, quite a different gift. He groups his pictures according to the moral effect he wishes to produce; here comes in his vigour as an artist; there is life and union between his personages. No painter has had Greuze's knack of representing the disorder, graceful in itself, which children bring into the home circle. The reason is that he had seen it himself; he had felt it; and therefore he was able to reproduce it well, without any call on his imagination.

We may therefore come to the conclusion that Greuze will live in posterity as essentially a painter

of women, girls, and children. Subjects that interest us make us eloquent, and that is what happened to Greuze whenever his brush touched the lips or the cheeks of a young girl. What a man loves most he does best. Greuze's pencil has often more truth in it than his brush, and this is easily accounted for because of the daily, almost hourly observation in the street and country to which he had accustomed himself. In classifying his position in art, there is a curious anomaly. Jean Baptiste Greuze is a painter of second order, who by a happy chance, at one period of his life, took his place in the first rank. He appeared just in the nick of time, and he profited thereby. His great repute lasted about twenty-five years. His place is between Boucher and David; the latter was destined to overthrow all the traditions of the old school. Greuze followed in the footsteps of the Flemish and the Dutch schools, only he brought his pictures up to date; he was an interpreter of the spirit of his day, as the novelists and philosophers of the time were. To personify an epoch, however short, especially of such a tumultuous nation as France, was of itself a touch of genius, which has rendered its author immortal.

And so we take leave of our artist, who, with all his imperfections and weaknesses, over which he never entirely triumphed, convinced that he

was a great painter, who has, and ever will have, a charm and a grace of his own, a delightful freshness which he must have borrowed from the children and the young girls whom he loved to reproduce. Therefore his immortality is assured; if not in the very first rank of artists, he will still hold no mean place in the affections of the multitude.

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Septimus Severus reproaching Caraculla (1769)
Village Bride (1761)
Broken Pitcher (1769)
Father's Curse ,,
Punished Son ,,
Portrait of the Painter Jeaurat (1769)
Two Studies of Young Girls . . . Louvre, Paris.

Head of Young Girl . . .	Louvre, Paris.
Head of Young Man . . .	,, ,,
Pelotonneuse	Aix Museum.
Inconsolate Widow . . .	,,
Female Portrait . . .	,,
Two Children's Heads . .	,,
Portrait of Duke de Morny . .	,,
Return from Tavern . . .	,,
Little Lazy One . . .	,,
Madeline, and others . . .	,,
Portrait of Baron Rothschild . .	,,
Triumph of Galatea . . .	,,
Study of a Child . . .	,,
Lady with Spaniel . . .	Angers Museum.
Boy's Portrait . . .	Besançon Museum.
Girl's Head	,, ,,
Male Portrait . . .	Cherbourg Museum.
Psyche Crowning Love . .	Lille Museum.
Artist's Portrait . . .	Lyons Museum.
Male Portrait . . .	Marseilles Museum.
Danae	Metz Museum.
Bacchante	,,
Boy's Bust	,,
Male Portrait . . .	,,
Morning Prayer (1774) . .	,,
Twelfth Cake ,, . .	,,
Little Mathematician (1755) . .	,,
The Paralytic ,, . .	,,
Little Child ,, . .	,,
Six Studies of Girls ,, . .	,,
Two Portraits . . .	Montpellier Museum.
Portraits of Madame M. Maurice and Son	Nantes Museum.
Old Woman's Head . . .	Nimes Museum.
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Napoleon and Consul	Versailles Museum.
Portrait of Fontenelle (1793)	,, ,,
Old Woman with Crutch	Madrid Museum.
Girl with Apples	} National Gallery, London.
Two Studies of Girls	
La Trompette	Buckingham Palace.
Two Studies of Girls	,, ,,
Innocence	} South Kensington Museum.
Portrait of Artist's Mother	
Innocence	Hampton Court Palace.
Girl with Doves	,, ,,
Reflection	,, ,,
Portrait of Sir R. Wallace	,, ,,
Throwing a Kiss	,, ,,
Young Girl with Watch	,, ,,
The Letter	,, ,,
Portrait of Baron Alfred de Rothschild	,, ,,
Portraits of Madame de Pompadour and Louis XV.	,, ,,
Beggar Boy	Fitz-William Museum, Cambridge.
Interior of Peasant's Cottage	National Gallery, Edinburgh.
Girl with Dead Canary	,, ,,
Boy with Lesson Book	,, ,,
Two Studies of Girls	,, ,,
Child's Head	Glasgow Gallery.
Sulky Boy	,, ,,
Young Woman and Child	Rotterdam Museum.
Portrait of Louis XVI.	Carlsruhe Gallery.
Emperor Caracalla	Gotha Museum.
Young Girl	Berlin Museum.
Old Penokothak (1781)	,, ,,
Father Reading Bible to his Children (1755)	Dresden Museum.

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Young Girl and Boy with School Book	,, ,,
Male Portrait . . .	,, ,,
Girl with Doll . . .	,, ,,
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Portrait of Louis XVII. . .	,, ,,
Portrait of Duc de Choiseul . .	,, ,,
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Portrait de M. Silvestre, directeur de l'Académie.
,, M. Labas, du cabinet du Roi.
Un Oiseleur accordant sa guitare.
Portrait de Pigalle.
,, M . . . en ovale.

Un Matelot Napolitain.
Un Ecolier qui étudie sa leçon.
Des Italiens qui jouent à la more.
Le Repos (une femme impose silence à son fils en lui montrant les autres enfants qui dorment).
La Simplicité.
La Tricoteuse endormie.
La Dévideuse.
Portrait de M. de . . . jouant de la harpe.
,, Mme. la marquise de . . . accordant sa guitare.
Portrait de Mlle. de . . . sentant une rose.
,, Mlle. Amici en habit de caractère.
,, Babuty, libraire, beau-père de Greuze.
Deux Esquisses à l'encre de Chine.
Portrait de M. Greuze, peint par lui-même.
,, ,, en vestale.
Un Père qui vient de payer la dot de sa fille.
Une Tête de nymphe de Diane.
L'Enfant qui boude.
L'Enfants qui se repose sur sa chaise.
Des Enfants qui derobent des marrons.
Le Paralytique.
Le Fermier incendié.
La Piété filiale.
Portrait de Mademoiselle.
,, M. le Comte de Lupé.
,, Mlle. de Pange.
,, Mme. Greuze.
,, M. Watelet.
Une Petite fille lisant la Croix de Jésus.
Le tendre Ressouvenir.
L'Enfant gâté.
Tête en pastel.
Portrait du graveur Wille.

Portrait du sculpteur Caffieri.
,, de Mme. Tassart.
,, de la Live de Jully.
Le Fils ingrat.
Le Fils puni.
Les Severeuses.
La Petite Fille en camisole qui tient entre ses genoux un chien noir, avec lequel elle joue.
Portrait du prince héréditaire de Saxe-Gotha.
,, de peintre Jeaurat.
,, de Mme. de . . .
La Mort d'un père de famille regretté par ses enfants.
La Mort d'un père de famille dénaturé abandonné par ses enfants.
L'Avare et ses enfants.
La Bénédiction paternelle.
Le Départ de la bercelonette.
La consolation de la vieillesse.
Portrait du Chivingieur Louis (il a été gravé par Cathelin).
Portrait de M. D'Angevelliers surintendant des Beaux-Arts.
Portrait du Franklin.
Caton qui se perce de son épée.
Un epoux hereux arrivant de la chasse.
La Bénédicité.
La paix du ménage.
Le gâteau des Rois.
La Maman.
La Grand'maman.
La Belle Mère.
La Testament déchiré (gravé par Sevasseur).
Le retour de nourrice.
La toilette du matin.
La jeune fille, à la chambre.

Les Ecosseuses de pois.
Une jeune fille à l'autel de l'amour.
Ariane à Naxos.
Les Fileuses au rouet.
La jeune fille blonde.
La jeune fille brune.

The following are the names of the museums where Greuze's pictures may be seen :—

In France.—The Louvre, Versailles, Aix, Angers, Besançon, Cherbourg, Dijon, Compiègne, Douai, Lille, Lyons, Marseilles, Montpellier, Nantes, Nimes, Rouen, Tournus, Troyes; at the Church of Saint Madeleine of Tournus, and in the collections of Mme. la Baronne Nathaniel de Rothschild ; of M. le Baron de Rothschild, member of the Institute ; of MM. the Barons Gustave and Edmund de Rothschild. There are also some in the possession of M. Edouard André, M. le Duc de la Trémoille, M. le Comte Greffulhe, M. Henry Lacroix, and M. le Marquis de Pange, who possesses a very beautiful portrait, by Greuze, of his grandmother, the Marquise de Pange.

In Germany.—At the Museums of Berlin, Karlsruhe, Leipzig, and Munich.

In Alsace-Lorraine.—At the Museum of Metz a very agreeable portrait of the Comte D'Angiviller is to be seen.

In the United States.—At the Museums of Boston and Philadelphia.

In England.—At the National Gallery; in the Crown Collection at Buckingham Palace; in the collections of Lady Anthony de Rothschild; of the Marquis of Lansdowne; of Mr. Holsford, in his splendid residence, Dorchester House; Sir Charles Mills; the Earl of

Dudley; at M. H. L. Bischoffshiem's; at Lord Yarborough's; at the Earl of Rosebery's; at the Baron Ferdinand de Rothschild's; at M. Morrison's, Esq.; at the Earl of Normanton's; at M. G. Field's, Esq.; at M. Robarts's, Esq.; and at the Wallace Collection, Hertford House, Denmark Square.

In Scotland.—At the National Gallery of Scotland, and at Lord Murray's.

In Russia.—At the Imperial Museum of the Hermitage, and the Imperial Academy of des Beaux Arts; also at the house of M. le Comte S. Strogonoff.

FRANÇOIS BOUCHER

CHAPTER I

EDUCATION

François Boucher's birth—Hereditary talent—Born an artist, educated for an artist—Lemoyne's studio—The master's position in Art—First picture—Short apprenticeship—His adoption of Lemoyne's style—Père Cars—An illustrator—First friendship—The Cars, father and son, are engravers—Boucher employed for the composition of pictures—He distinguishes himself—Eight plates of great Englishmen are executed by him—Turned his hand to any sort of designing—Great industry—First academical prize—Love of Art—Money was the result, not the object—Desire to be known—Publication of the works of Antoine Watteau—Four years of study in Rome—A child of the century—Albani—Pietre de Cortoni—Diderot's dislike of Boucher—A series of religious pictures—His character—Adopts mythology—The three Graces—His love for Venus.

FRANÇOIS BOUCHER was essentially a Parisian, born in the Rue de la "Verrerie," in the parish of Saint Jean-en-Grêve, on a Saturday, the 29th of September, 1703. His father was Nicolas Boucher, "a master painter," who

married Elizabeth Lemesle, mother of the future artist. We find only occasional mention made of Nicolas Boucher, "*maître peintre*"; he seems to have tried his hand at a variety of artistic styles, such as designing fashionable patterns for covering furniture, and embroidery of different descriptions. There is mention made of Nicolas Boucher in a catalogue in the Louvre, where he is called a "designer for embroidery," and again in the Galerie Française he is spoken of somewhat disparagingly as "an inferior designer, little favoured by fortune." Humble though his parentage was, François Boucher had nevertheless the advantage of being born and educated in artistic surroundings.

It is more than probable that his father was the first to put a pencil into his hand and to give him his first drawing lesson; that he was quick to perceive that his son was endowed with certain artistic characteristics is also evident, seeing that at an early age he placed François under the care of the celebrated Lemoyne.

Unlike most artists, there was never any doubt as to the future career of François Boucher. He was born an artist, he was educated for an artist, and throughout his whole life, from the cradle to the grave, he breathed the atmosphere of art.

When he first took his place in Lemoyne's studio his master had not as yet attained the

celebrity which was his a few years later—first as painter of "Hercule and Omphale" (in 1724), and afterwards, in 1736, as the creator of the magnificent ceiling at Versailles. It was about the year 1720 that François Boucher entered Lemoyne's studio and painted a picture entitled "Le Jugement de Suzanne," which his master recognised at once as a production of no ordinary merit, especially for a youth of barely seventeen.

How long he remained in Lemoyne's studio, and the reason why he left, are both disputed points. Certain it is that he left his master after a very short apprenticeship; he himself states it to have lasted barely three months. If such be the case, it is simply marvellous how he succeeded in imitating Lemoyne's style and in adopting his subjects. Some of his early pictures were for a long time attributed to the older artist, especially the "Birth and Death of Adonis." It was only in 1860 that the initials "F.B." were discovered in an obscure corner of this picture, "The Birth of Adonis," and reference being made to a catalogue of the period, the two pictures were found under the name of Boucher. This was decisive, though in style, colouring, and drawing, they might easily have passed for Lemoyne's.

Upon leaving his first master Boucher took up his residence with de Cars, familiarly known as "Père de Cars." He was a printer, and the

young artist was employed to illustrate subjects, which afterwards passed into the engraver's hands. He was offered for this work his board and lodging and sixty livres a month, a veritable fortune for a beginner. Here he formed his first friendship with his master's son, Laurent Cars; they were both of the same age and possessed of similar tastes. Laurent, like his father, was an engraver, and was about to produce a series of plates of "Andromeda and Perseus," taken from drawings by Lemoyne. Many of them were considered *chefs-d'œuvre*. They were in the form of medallions used as placards for allegorical interpretations. Père Cars carried on a considerable business in this line, for which he employed both the literary teller of legends and the imagination of the artist. Boucher distinguished himself in these productions, displaying an inexhaustible talent for ornamentation and decoration. Many of the plates signed with his name found their way to England. One of these designs is especially remarkable: it represents Mars, flanked by Fame and surrounded by cupids, giving orders to Vulcan, who is below with a squad of Cyclops busy forging arms. At the entrance to the grotto there is the following remarkable inscription: "Yoanni Churchill duci di Malborough; forti, felici, invicto. (engraved by Laurent Cars)."

This was by no means the only design which he

executed in honour of distinguished Englishmen. He is accredited with eight plates, which were published in a large in-folio under the titles of: "The grave of princes, great captains, and illustrious men, who flourished in Great Britain."

The names of those thus honoured are: Boyle, Locke, and Sydenham (engraved by Cl. Duflos); Charles Sackville, Earl of Dorset and Middlesex (engraved by Michel Aubert); Tillotson, Archbishop of Canterbury (engraved by Larmessin); William III. (engraved by Surugne); Sidney, Earl Godolphin (engraved by Cochin).

From the excellence of the work these plates were probably later productions, in earlier days he undertook every sort of work—nothing was too insignificant for his fertile imagination and pencil. Thus there still exists, signed by him, coats-of-arms, emblematical designs, frames for diplomas, or commemorative cards for the first communion. He tried his hand at everything which might in any way attract the public. There exists still a pictorial alphabet designed by Boucher and engraved by his friend Laurent Cars; also a History of France, with twenty-five vignettes (engraved by Raquory and Mathey). Throughout his whole life his industry was immense, almost feverish. As early as 1723, when he was barely twenty years of age, he carried off the first academical prize for painting, the subject

of which, to say the least of it, was uninviting, namely: "Evilnerodach, fils et successeur de Nabuchodonosor, délivrant Joachim des chaînes, dans lesquelles son père le retenait depuis longtemps."

Thus gradually but surely he made his way, and his name became familiar to amateurs, librarians, in fact, to the artistic world in general. He painted for the love of painting; he could not stay his hand; with or without orders his brush never flagged. Money was the result, not the object for which he worked. To display his pictures, to win admiration and glory, was his ambition, and he was lavish in bestowing his pictures as gifts to almost anyone who asked them of him.

This desire to be known amounted almost to a passion with the young artist: he absolutely threw himself away. A curious story is told in proof of this.

At the yearly procession of the Fête Dieu the houses in the streets through which it passed were by royal command decorated, namely, the fronts were hung with carpets, tapestry, or even sheets. It became habitual to utilise this custom for the benefit of young artists, who exhibited on the draperies the pictures they had executed. This show was called "The Exhibition of the Young." In the year 1725 Boucher took advan-

tage of it, and hung several small pictures for public approbation. These have mostly disappeared, and only a series of religious engravings, which do him but little credit, serve to testify to his industry at this period of his life. They are very inferior, have evidently been thrown off hastily, either from indifference or because of a sudden want of funds; in any case, religious pictures were never Boucher's forte.

Behind "Père Cars's" shop, in the Rue St. Jacques, was an engraver's studio, where Boucher worked with his friend, Laurent Cars. A stroke of great good luck befell him in the year 1725. M. de Julienne, editor, was engaged upon the publication of the works of Antoine Watteau, engraving from pictures and original drawings belonging to the King, and which were considered among the most valuable in Europe. Julienne chose young Boucher to collaborate with him, and entrusted him with no less than 125 plates. Apart from the work and the honour of being chosen to carry it out, the important experience gained by the study of so great a master as Watteau was of inestimable value to him; it served both to refine and develop his natural talent. He threw his whole heart and soul into the work, and was eminently successful; he executed the order with ease and rapidity, and received good emolument, M. de Julienne paying him twenty-four livres a day.

During four consecutive years Boucher devoted himself to this style of work, to the study of nature and the rules of his art; then in 1727 he went to Rome. He was sent by the French Academy, and some say that on account of his having obtained the first prize for painting, he received a pension. Both these statements are disputed, and it is averred that Boucher paid his own expenses. Certain it is that he left Paris in company of Carle van Loo and his two nephews, François and Louis, and arrived in Rome June, 1728.

The Director of the Academy was at that time Monsieur Wenghels. He judged him most favourably, and pronounced him to be "a young man of no conceit and of considerable merit." He showed him exceptional kindness, even giving him "a little hole of a room" in the house. This hospitality was sometimes offered to young students, who had neither the title nor the privilege of being pensioners of the State.

Of Boucher's residence in Rome and his travels in Italy we have very slight accounts. It has been affirmed that he neither understood nor appreciated the *chefs-d'œuvre* of the great Italian masters. Such may very possibly have been the case, for, as we shall show later on, François Boucher had very little mental culture. He was essentially in himself and in his art a child of the century, light-

hearted and careless, enamoured of brilliant colouring, of cupids and Venuses, of garlands of flowers, a worshipper of all that appealed to the senses. How, then, could such a mind be expected to appreciate Raphael and Michael Angelo? He pronounced the former "insipid," and the latter "crooked in design and execution." It is almost painful to record these sentiments, at the same time, they are typical of the man and of the artist.

We have no record of where he went in Italy when he left Rome, which he did after a very short residence in the Eternal City. In 1781 in a catalogue of the sale Tireuil there is a picture by Boucher painted at Rome, "A View of the Temple of Peace and the Road leading to the Vatican." Two other engravings by Jeaurat of pictures by Boucher painted about this period are the only guides we have to his whereabouts. They lead us to suppose that he found his way to Venice. "Paysanne des environs de Ferrare" and "Costumes de femmes Italiennes."

Two Italian artists exercised considerable influence over his work—Albane and Pietre de Cortone. He evidently caught the elegance and grace which distinguish the works of the first-named artist, and from the second he borrowed the picturesque grouping of his figures, as well as his marvellous effects of light and shade.

It was the opinion of such men as Antoine Bret, l'Abbé Leblanc, and even of Diderot, who has seldom a good word to say for Boucher, that the first pictures he painted after his return from Italy are remarkable for their vigour and force, both of design and execution, namely, "The Meeting of Rachel and Jacob," "Eliezar and Rebecca," "The Jesuit Martyrs in Japan." The engravings of these pictures, executed by Laurent Cars, have alone come down to posterity. Also "Le Mariage des enfants de Dieu avec les enfants des hommes," engraved by Brion. Add to these "The Departure of Jacob"; "Separation of Laban and Jacob"; "Noé offrant un sacrifice à la sorti de l'Arche"; "Samson endormi sur les genoux de Dalila"; "Jesus bénissant Saint Jean"; and several others, the dates of which are uncertain. These productions gave Boucher a right to call himself "an historical painter," and as such he was nominated to the Academy on the 24th November, 1731. A Parisian lives in Paris, elsewhere he only exists. Returned from his travels, Boucher was soon once more in touch with his old friends, and with the spirit of his beloved city. He at once felt that Old Testament and historical subjects were not suitable, and not likely to prove popular with a public whose principal object in life was amusement. A few old Academicians might admire and appreciate that style, but the general taste



CUPID

would not be satisfied, and so, being a child of his century, he threw himself heart and soul into pleasing his public, with the result that he became their spoilt darling. It never entered his mind that it was his business to instruct or teach moral lessons by his brush.

Naturally amiable, kind-hearted, loving pleasure, and essentially voluptuous, he set himself the easy task of painting what pleased his eyes and his senses. Mythology, the stories of gods and goddesses, could alone give full scope to this phase. "Venus commandant à Vulcain des armes pour Enée" was his first great work of this period, and was evidently painted under the influence of his old master, Lemoyne. Boucher was always partial to Venus, and told her story again and again. She was his mistress, and his brush lingered lovingly as he depicted her charms. The contrast between Vulcan's warm brown flesh-tints and the whiteness of the goddess's beautiful body, as lying on a cloud she approached Vulcan, is of itself a revelation. The colouring, the attitude of Venus and the three nymphs who accompany her, are fascinating; the touch of pink on the tips of the fingers, and the nostrils, etc.—a trick which grew to be as familiar to the public as the artist's signature—was simply perfect; but there was no lack of expression either in the face or in the pose. Venus represents the woman

triumphant, full of coquetry even in her smile, which seems to plead, but which, in truth, commands, as she points with her delicate finger to the arms she desires to possess. There is no hesitation, no doubt about her; she comes to conquer, armed herself with the wonderful charm of her womanhood; and there is not the shadow of doubt but what the surly Vulcain, looking askance at her, will yield what she demands.

This picture was the background of many similar ones, and to a certain extent is typical of Boucher's style. He is generally known as the painter of "The Graces," an appellation which well expresses both his artistic and personal character. For many years this picture hung in the Louvre, but was removed to Fontainebleau, where it is at present in the little apartments with pictures of J. B. Van Loo, Vien, etc.



THE THREE GRACES

CHAPTER II

CHARACTER

Boucher possessed of the rare power of combining pleasure and work—His careless light-heartedness—Lack of morality—His marriage—Jeanne Buseau—Her beauty—La Tour's picture of her as a bride—Roslin's portrait thirty years later—Advice given to Boucher concerning illustrations for the fable of Psyché—His wife adapted her life to his and was also an artist—His academical picture—Greek art—Seeking his place in art—Returns to engraving—Acquaintance with Meissonnier—Illustrates pamphlets—Breviary of Paris—The cries of Paris—Play work—Rapidity of production—Competition—Nominated sub-professor—Court decorator to the Queen—Don Quichotte—Designer for the Beauvais manufacture—"The Crocodile Hunt"—His fame on the increase—His opinion anonymously asked—Change of manners and customs—*Siècle Louis XV.*

FRANÇOIS BOUCHER possessed the rare gift of being able to combine an inordinate love of pleasure with an equally unusual power of work.

We are told that he was capable of working twelve consecutive hours, and it is certain that throughout his life, from earliest childhood to old age, with his pencil in his hand, he won his way,

enjoying life to the full, denying himself no sort of indulgence or personal pleasure.

Of morality, as we understand it, he had none. He took his amusements how and where he found them, without ever considering the consequences to himself or others. His brush was the lever which swept away all difficulties. Even in the pursuit of pleasure he gathered ideas, as the bee sucks honey from the heart of the flowers. It was a perfect combination. His work was never a burden to him, rather a delight, and he accomplished it with a joyous carelessness; it was part of himself; it stamped his pictures with that voluptuous character which met with such severe criticism from many. Nevertheless, in the midst of this full and busy life he found time to fall in love and get married.

He entered upon that estate with the same careless lightheartedness which distinguished his every action. The chains he forged for himself were slight indeed, and easily broken; his fidelity was of the shallowest, but such as it was, it evidently satisfied his wife, for we hear of no such scenes of discord as marked Greuze's matrimonial career. Their temperaments evidently suited each other; they were both Parisians. She, Marie Jeanne Buseau, was born in Paris on the 8th of January, 1716, and was therefore seventeen years and three months old on the day of their marriage,

the 21st of April, 1733. The ceremony took place in the celebrated Church of St. Roch, in the Rue St. Honoré.

There is little doubt but that François Boucher was enamoured of his wife when he married her, for, according to all accounts, she was a beauty. There are still extant several portraits of Madame Boucher—one by La Tour in a private collection at Bordeaux, which was exhibited in the Salon of 1737, and which was probably painted shortly after her marriage. She is represented in a white satin gown, with a delicate lace scarf draped over her bare shoulders, and with white mittens lined with rose-coloured silk on her pretty hands. She is very fair, with soft blue eyes and a charming smile. It is in itself an exquisite picture of youth and beauty. In 1761 the painter Roslin exhibited another picture of her as she is styled "the still beautiful Madame Boucher."

When François Boucher received an order to paint a series of pictures illustrative of La Fontaine's fable of Psyché, the advice was given him that, for the proper execution of the same, he would do well to read and re-read the fable, but, above all things, to "look long and well at Madame Boucher."

He certainly at one time reproduced her graceful figure in many of his pictures, and whatever their home life might be (and naturally there were

many calumnies concerning them both), she certainly adapted herself to her husband's artistic life. She was his frequent companion, working with him in his studio, and she painted several miniatures, copies of his pictures; she also executed two original water-colour pictures signed Jeanne Boucher, which are very creditable productions. So much for his domestic life, which was never allowed to interfere with his artistic career.

It was fully two years after he had been nominated for the Academy before he made up his mind to become a full-blown Academician. Of course, the regulation picture had to be painted, and shortly after his marriage, he set about it. The subject he chose was "Rénaud et Armide," and he seems to have determined to prove his claim to the title of "Historical Painter," an indispensable passport to academical honours. In a great measure he thrust on one side his decorative tastes, and applied himself to representing a half-Ionic style of architecture, placing as a background to his picture a circular colonnade, from whence hung a grey-green drapery. The effect is somewhat heavy—probably he intended it to be so; but he could not belie himself, and the figure of "Armide," coquette and fair under her white veil, with bare legs and bosom, is once more essentially Boucher. The colouring

and the composition are delightful—cupids peep out from beneath the heavy drapery, spying upon the lovers, whilst another urchin throws into the folds of her scarf two delicate blue flowers. No; assuredly Boucher was never intended for a stern historical painter; but the value of his work was duly appreciated, and on the 30th of January, 1734, he received his title of Academician.

It is rare for even the greatest genius to find at once the right path which leads to glory, he wanders hither and thither in quest of that coy Goddess of Fortune! It was even so with Boucher. For a time he forsook his gods and goddesses, and applied himself to the far more matter-of-fact representation of cooks and village maidens.

He painted "La Belle Cuisinière" and "La Belle Villageoise" for an English nobleman, imitating for these the style of Chardin, Greuze's predecessor as moral painter. These "genre pictures" were beginning to be the fashion, but Boucher's character showed itself even in the *pêle-mêle* of saucepans, frying-pans, vegetables, and all the many culinary accessories with which the picture is replete. He managed to throw a certain grace over what is essentially commonplace. It is amusingly told of him "that even broomsticks and the very handles of his saucepans all look as if they were waiting to be adorned with rosettes and knots of ribbon." He never

omits that "one touch of nature" which makes "the whole world kin." The cook has her lover and forgets her saucepans :—

> "Vos œufs s'échappent, Mathurine ;
> Ce présage est mauvais pour vous."

Both these pictures were engraved by Aveline, 1738.

After this he passes into another phase, or, rather, he returns to his old love, and once more becomes an illustrator. Molière, Racine, and Corneille all pass through his hands, and are engraved by his friend Laurent Cars. Racine and Corneille are said not to have been his, but imitations by Gravelotte; they bore the characteristics of the undoubted illustrator of Molière.

At this time he made the acquaintance of Jules Aurèle Meissonnier, who exercised considerable influence over his future work. So intimate did they become that in May, 1736, Meissonnier stood godfather to Boucher's eldest son.

Several series of illustrated pamphlets followed —one on Verses, another on Pastorales, one on the Seasons, one the Elements. These six pamphlets consisted entirely of groups of children. There were doubtless many others which we have lost sight of.

A remarkable production was the four illustrations which he executed in 1736 for the Bréviare



A SKETCH

of Paris, representing "Faith as the Invalides," "Hope as the Louvre," "Charity, the Pont Neuf," "Religion, Notre Dame."

In contradistinction to these sacred subjects there appeared a few months later: "The Cries of Paris," engraved by Ravenet and Le Bas; "Le Gagne Petit!" "Charbon, Charbon!" "Balais, balais!" "Des Radis!" "Des Raves!" "A la Crême!" and many others with which Paris was delighted. He lent such a charm, almost elegance, to the most sordid figure. The cries with their rhythm and music rose up to his high-storied room, and he transfigured them by the poetry of his art. He never looked upon misery closer than need be; over rags he cast a glamour; it was a great gift, and one which came naturally to him.

It must not be supposed that these trifles sufficed to occupy a mind and pencil like Boucher's. His easel was never empty—one picture followed another with almost bewildering rapidity.

The Academy of Painting and Sculpture decided to test the capacity of its members, and an election of professors for the ensuing year being about to take place, they settled that on the 3rd of July, 1735, any aspirants for the vacant post should exhibit a sample of their work done or finished during that year.

The principal artists of the day answered to the

call—the Van Loos, father and son, Vien, Chardin, Natoire, and others. Boucher sent four small pictures of the four seasons, which were especially remarked for the originality of the subjects and their exquisite colouring. They consisted of little fauns and children so delicately painted that he was unanimously elected, with Natoire and Van Loo, as sub-professor. This new official position was but the forerunner of greater honours. In 1735 he was called upon to redecorate the Queen's apartments, and he painted four panels in grey tints of "Charity," "Abundance," "Fidelity," and "Prudence." The cries of Paris were followed up in April, 1737, by the history of "Don Quichotte," for which he collaborated with Parrocel, Tremolières, and other celebrated artists. One of Boucher's compositions became very popular—it represented "Sancho pursued by the Duke's Scullions," a comic-heroic composition full of buffoonery.

The subject had been used before in the manufactory of the Gobelin tapestry, and probably this is what brought him into notice there.

Monsieur Oudry had with Nicolas Bernier been made director of the Beauvais manufactures with a lease of twenty years. He exerted himself to obtain good designs, and called the best artists to his assistance. Boucher was among the first, and his designs were numerous, taken mostly from

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THE SWING

mythology—"Psyche and Love," "The Toilette of Psyche," "The Offering of Love," "Gathering the Cherries," and some dozen others. The most famous was "The Swing." It was a subject which Watteau and many other painters had affected, but Boucher is considered to have carried off the palm for both delicacy of composition and colouring. In whatever he attempted, the master's hand was visible. Oudry introduced into the tapestries of both the Gobelins and Beauvais a series of hunting scenes, and Boucher designed a "Crocodile Hunt" for the private apartments of the King at Versailles. Gradually, but surely, he was rising in fame. In 1737 an anonymous individual, supposed to be perfectly disinterested in his judgment, was requested to draw up a list of the best painters of the French Academy, and almost at the head we find Sieur François Boucher. Numerous pictures of his at this time are noted as "faits pour le Roy," and at the Salon of the 18th of August, 1737, four pictures, landscapes, figures of animals, etc., are remarked as being the work of "Monsieur Boucher, the worthy pupil of Monsieur Lemoyne." "Old times were changed, old manners gone," a new generation had come upon the scenes; the imposing grandeur of the Court represented by the great Salons of the Louvre, decorated with a certain solemnity of colouring and outline, had given place to a lighter

form of decoration. Salons and boudoirs, light and elegant, sprang into existence, places for rest and amusement after the restraint and fatigue of public representations. Life even at Court was no longer to be dreary; recreation was the order of the day; coquetry, love, and courtship, gallant adventures, carried through with light-hearted merriment, whiled away the days and nights of the essentially amorous Court of Louis XV. It was a transformation,—after Louis XIV.—Louis XV.; after Madame de Maintenon—Madame de Pompadour; after Le Brun—Boucher!

CHAPTER III

ADVANCEMENT

Boucher's decorative art—The Hotel of Soubise—The "Grand Seigneur"—Boucher's pictures, as a rule, retain their colouring—Boucher no teacher—The Princess's alcove—Boucher attempted to copy Watteau, but failed—"Venus, leaning on Cupid, descends from her Car to enter her Bath"—His best production up to this date—Boucher a pastelist—His reason for adopting this style—Nominated designer for the Beauvais tapestry manufacture—The Grand Opera—He becomes a landscape-painter—Boucher always ready to take up anything new—Japanese and Chinese art—His portrait—The King's cabinet of medals—Boucher at home with the gods and goddesses—His zenith, 1753—He obtains a pension of 400 livres—Notice of Boucher by Antoine Bret remarkable for its just appreciation—How he pandered to the vitiated tastes of Louis XV. to his discredit.

NOTWITHSTANDING the variety of Boucher's artistic flights, he was essentially a decorator. His works require really the setting off for which they were designed; panels framed in garlands of finely sculptured flowers on a background of delicate grey tints. With such surroundings they are in perfect harmony, but, alas, their place knows them no more! Only here and

there we come across a chance scrap which has escaped the hands of the Vandals. Such is the case in the old Hôtel de Soubise, now transformed into a museum.

The Prince of Soubise, a "Grand Seigneur" before the Revolution, built on the site of the old Hôtel de Guise a palace in accordance with his rank and wealth. Brunetti and Boffrand were entrusted with the decoration, and chose for that purpose the best artists of the Academy. We find the following list quoted: Boucher, Parrocel, Natoire, Trémolières, Carle van Loo, and Restout. Boucher's share of the work was seven pictures, the figures life-size; five of these are still in place. One, representing "The Three Graces, bound by Love," has unfortunately lost its beautiful colouring and has turned black. This was a rare accident for any of Boucher's pictures: they generally retained their colour perfectly. A copy of the same picture in the Morny Collection, painted and signed 1738, is still to be seen in a high state of preservation. In one of the Salons there is a picture entitled "The Education of Love by Mercury," somewhat stiff and cold. Boucher neither cared to give or to take a lesson; he was no teacher. In the Princess's Alcove there are two pastorales representing shepherds and shepherdesses in white satin, with powdered hair, stockings of pale blue, and coats of pale rose



CUPIDS

be his best production up to that time. He had thrown off all the extraneous influences of different schools and masters, and allowed his own genius full play; the result is a seductive picture, not without faults of drawing, but so perfectly fascinating in colouring, in lights and shades, that one voluntarily ignores any defect. He shows himself the master in the first full maturity of his power.

About the same time, towards the end of 1738, actuated by that love of change and certainty of success which distinguishes him, he turned his attention to pastels, which were very suitable to his style, needing that lightness of touch for which he was so remarkable. His friendship with La Tour, who was so entirely a pastelist, was probably the origin of this change. His two best pastel drawings were a three-quarter figure of a young boy, and a picture exhibited in the Gallery Rottan; also a three-quarter figure of a young woman, with a black mantilla over her shoulders, a knot of blue ribbon round her bare throat, her eyes brilliant and moist smiling beneath her powdered hair—a charming incarnation of womanhood. His nomination as designer for the Beauvais tapestry manufacture led him into the closer observation of rural scenery, as he required landscapes for the backgrounds of his tapestries; therefore, with his usual facility of imagination and power of execution, he became a landscape-

painter. A pupil of his, Jacques-Nicolas Julian, desirous of being sent to study at Rome, applied for a nomination, stating that he was a pupil of the Academy, for the last ten years under M. Boucher, and acting by his advice, he desired to apply himself more especially to the study of landscape-painting, which was much neglected in France, though required for the King's service in his manufactures of tapestry, decorations, and other public works.

From henceforth landscape-painting became of considerable importance in Boucher's pictures; but, as usual, he adapted it after his own particular fashion, more imaginative than real. He studied and used nature from his point of view, namely, what we should term decorative art, such as is represented on the stage. The title of one of his pictures, "A Landscape in which a Mill is represented," shows this pretty clearly. Another picture in the same style, the "Hameau d'Issé," was three feet high and two feet in breadth, and was executed for the Grand Opera, where in due time it appeared. He was always ready to take up anything new; so, when in 1740 a sudden taste for Chinese and Japanese subjects became the fashion, a book by M. F. Boucher was announced, representing the five senses after Chinese designs, to be followed, it was announced, by eight sketches in a similar style for the Beau-

vais tapestry. These are still to be seen in the Museum of Besançon. A great number of other sketches and designs are scattered in private and public collections, called "Chinoiserie." Although occupied incessantly with these apparently trivial productions, which we may consider really as the overflow of his marvellously fertile imagination and his unceasing industry, he was at the same time producing a large picture in honour of Venus, the goddess of his predilection, whom he delighted to honour above all others. "The Birth and Triumph of Venus" was the subject of this picture. As a painting and work of art it is generally pronounced incomparable; the moral laxity with which the subject is treated is offensive; but it was of the period, and Boucher was to the tip of his fingers essentially the painter of the *siècle Louis XV.* There is a portrait of him at this time, in pastel, by Lundberg; he is on the threshold of maturity, the zenith of his renown. A man of middle height, thin, nervous, restless, with a long nose, and large wide-open eyes, which, nevertheless, have a tired look in them expressive of nights passed in pleasure and dissipation, quite as much as of days of work. He certainly did, as we say in common parlance, burn the candle at both ends!

It was decided that the King's cabinet of medals should be removed from Versailles to Paris. This

THE BATH

necessitated other changes and fresh work for the artists Natoire, Carle Van Loo, and Boucher. Boucher had four orders. "Epic Poetry," "History," "Eloquence," and "Astronomy," were the subjects of his four panels, which he executed conscientiously, but without that sparkle which distinguishes so many of his pictures—in them he is the workman, not the inspired artist. It must ever be so: it is impossible for any man, either in art or literature, to maintain an equal glow of inspiration; the flame will flicker and grow dim at times if the subject or the thought does not appeal to him and so fan the spark divine.

Boucher was himself again in a small picture which was hung in the Salon of 1742, and which was purchased by the Louvre in 1882 for the sum of 3,200 francs; this is the well-known picture of Diana leaving the bath with her companions. It is impossible not to admire this work, which is well described as "the dream of an unscrupulous epicurean"; nevertheless, it is impregnated with genius. It was one of the purest types of Boucher's style.

There is in the *Necrologie des Hommes Célébres de France* for 1771 an able notice of Boucher, written by Antoine Bret, which is as free from virulent criticism, as it is from the extravagant praise alternately lavished by Diderot on the painter of "The Graces." From 1743 to 1753

Boucher may be considered to have attained his zenith; his work was throughout this period equal in quality and abundance; it represented the full growth of an artist's nature in its plenitude. He was not nearly at the end of his tether, but his work later on was more fitful. He had hours of inspiration, but at other times, as we have said before, the fire smouldered. The amount of work he accomplished was fabulous.

In 1742 he received a letter to this effect from the Cabinet d'Orry:—

"SIR,—The death of Sieur Martin leaves a pension of 400 livres at the Royal disposal. I have proposed to the King that you should be the recipient of this sum, and his Majesty has agreed thereto. I am glad to have had this opportunity of testifying the value I attach to your talents. The sum is small, but I trust to do better for you at some future period, feeling assured that you will continue to distinguish yourself as you have done up to the present time."

On the list of pensions we find Boucher mentioned as being in the receipt of a pension of 600 livres from 1744.

Though his pictures were sold at fair prices, his expenditure was such that he sometimes ran short of funds, as we are informed in these few witty lines:—

"J'ai des enfants et des besoins,
. . . . Dieu me créant
Ne m'a pas beaucoup mis au large
Et je sue en y suppléant."

But he had so many strings to his bow, such a power of pleasing every taste, that he always found a way out of his difficulties.

There is an interesting letter from Berch, secretary to the Count de Tessin, Ambassador to Sweden, which gives us an insight into Boucher's relations with his clients. It runs thus :—

"The four pictures are promised for the month of March. The price will remain a secret between your Excellency and Monsieur Boucher, on account of the 600 livres which, according to custom, will be paid to him for his notoriety; otherwise, his work is paid when delivered. He trusts with greater exactitude than heretofore. The subjects are to be Morning, Mid-day, Afternoon, and Evening. I hope before long to be able to send you sketches for your approval. Monsieur Boucher seems willing to do this."

Of these pictures, which were duly painted and delivered, there remains only one at Stockholm, "La Toilette," which answers to "Le Matin."

As we have said, Boucher ignored morality both in his life and art. He painted to please the vitiated taste of the century, so much so, that

a certain class of his pictures have never been exhibited—they are hidden away in secret museums. A story is told of how one day Madame de Pompadour came to her favourite artist and asked him to paint a series of pictures for the King, Louis XV., "qui s'ennuyait!!" When Louis XVI. ascended the throne he ordered them to be cleared out, and M. de Maupeon hid them in his own house. At the time of the emigration they followed their owner to Germany, to be brought back at the Restoration, when they were purchased by the Marquis of Hertford, as being "for the quality of painting, the delicacy of touch, and the charm of colour, the most beautiful Bouchers in the world."

The feminine, the eternal feminine! was Boucher's great attraction; his outline drawings and sketches were said to amount to 10,000. He could not produce them fast enough to satisfy amateurs and the public. It was a period given over to voluptuous pleasure, and he pandered to it. What did he not paint, this artist of the eighteenth century?



MADAME DE POMPADOUR

CHAPTER IV

A RIVAL

Boucher became chief decorator for the Opera in 1748—He created wonderful effects for the ballet—His cascades, running water, and lighting up excited great admiration—The favour of Madame de Pompadour raised him to the first position at Court—Madame de Pompadour an artist herself and the friend of artists—Boucher was her master—His renown was in a great measure established before she patronised him, but she protected him—His amiable character—His friendly relations with other artists—Difference between him and Greuze—Boucher criticised—Jean Baptiste Greuze makes his appearance in Boucher's studio—Diderot's philosophy of painting—Dark days for France and Art—He paints religious subjects: "La Lumière du Monde," great success—Boucher's revenge on the critics—His love for the pagan world—The purity of Christianity did not appeal to him.

BOUCHER'S first sketch of "Le Hameau d'Issé," executed as an operatic decoration, was followed by many others of a similar style: Castor, Pollux, Thésée, Sylvia, Titon, and Aurora.

In 1748 he succeeded Servandoni as chief decorator for the Opera, and as such he presided over the representation of the famous ballets, "Des

Indes Galantes" and "D'Athys," both of which had great success, the latter especially on account of a representation of the Palace on the river Sangar. The effect of the cascades, the running water, and the lighting up of the scenery, was greatly admired. He only held this position for two years. We are not told why he threw it up, probably because he was called upon to undertake work for Madame de Pompadour, whose favour henceforth raised him to the first position at Court. It is generally supposed that he owed his introduction to the King to Madame de Pompadour; but such, we know, was not the case, as he had already been employed for the adornment of the Queen's apartments, for which he had executed the four panels, representing the four seasons. When Madame de Pompadour summoned him to decorate her private apartments and her theatre at Bellevue, they were not strangers to each other; Boucher had been introduced to her before she became the King's favourite. Lenormant de Tourneheim had presented him, with Carle Van Loo and other artists, to his relative, Madame Lenormant d'Etoiles, who had an especial predilection for artists; and when she attained to power Boucher became not only *her artist* but *her professor*. He executed nearly all the drawings for her etchings, of which we have a long list, all representing more or less events of the period



SOAP BUBBLES

and portraits of the Royal Family, such as "The Birth of the Duc de Bourgogne," portraits of the Dauphin and Dauphiness, "Love sacrificed to Friendship," the "Battle of Lutzelberg," and some dozen others; also the portraits of "Mimi and Bébé," Madame de Pompadour's favourite dogs. She copied "Soap Bubbles," and other pictures by her master. She was naturally artistic, and Boucher's style suited her taste.

Though there is no doubt that her protection benefited him greatly, yet much of his work for the Court was executed anterior to her reign. He had already painted four large pictures for the Duchess's apartments; two pastoral scenes, entitled "Pensent-ils au raison," now in the Stockholm Museum.

In the royal accounts of 1747 two pictures are mentioned for the King's apartments at Marly, and are charged 800 livres. One represented "Venus entreating Vulcain to forge arms for Eneas." It was four feet in breadth, and three and a half in height.

We have already noticed this picture. He also painted at the same time a large picture of six feet by four. It represented the abduction of Europa, and was intended for a competition picture, ordered by the Academy, to encourage painters to apply themselves more earnestly than they had hitherto done to their art. The prize

consisted of six purses, containing one hundred silver counters and one gold medallion. The artists were to be their own judges and name their own lauréat. Ten artists competed, and between themselves they decided to divide the spoil, and thus avoid all jealousy. It was Boucher who made this proposition, and it may be noted here that throughout his whole career he was desirous of maintaining friendly relations with his fellow-artists. He was essentially a peacemaker, and naturally amiable; he was never known to have had a serious quarrel with anyone. Very different from Greuze, who was never without a grievance against someone, whether it were the King, the Academy, or the public. Boucher's was the happier nature. He loved his work; it engrossed him, and anything which might disturb his peace and tranquillity he avoided. So he was generally beloved, and until the last few years of his life it might be said his was a path of roses.

His picture of "Europa," which was finished in the autumn of 1747, was not a complete success, and was severely criticised, even by his friends. *Le Mercure*, a paper which had always been friendly to him, could not avoid hinting at "exaggerated rose-colour tints, etc." In fact, there began to circulate at this time vague whisperings of blame and criticism. Diderot first lifted up his voice in behalf of the philosophy of painting.

In Boucher's own studio there was a youth watching and studying the master's mannerisms, his colouring, and his compositions. A somewhat bumptious lad, fresh from the provinces, having learnt all he knew in a rough school of painting at Lyons, and who had made his way to Paris with the proud certainty that he was on the high road to fame and fortune. Happy, perfectly satisfied with himself, Jean Baptiste Greuze passed from one studio to the other, gathering knowledge and hoarding it up, certain of making use of it in due season. And veterans such as Boucher, Natoire, La Tour watched him, and doubtless recognised in him the genius which was to make him their successor.

Pleasure and dissipation cannot last for ever, and dark days were looming for France. "Après nous le deluge," Louis XV. had said in the midst of his ignoble pleasures, and verily it was coming, that deluge of blood!

A few saw it, and nobly strove to stay the rushing of the waters. Such voices as Rousseau's and Diderot's, proclaiming virtue, stigmatising vice, began to penetrate the heavy atmosphere of corruption which had so long hung over the Court and nation. Boucher, with his keen sensitiveness, felt it, and whilst he pandered to the Court tastes, there came over him at times, especially towards the close of his career, a sort of regret; and

thrusting on one side his gods and goddesses, his beloved Venus with her attendant cupids, he would send forth a gem such as "La Lumière du Monde" (the Nativity). It was a great success—the delicacy of the touch and the colouring being remarkable; but he was never really at home in the treatment of religious subjects. The first adverse criticisms to which he was subjected affected Boucher greatly; he had been so spoilt, so adulated, he was not prepared for a rebuff; and as he did not feel strong enough to answer these attacks with the pen, he did so with pungent sarcasm with his pencil. There exists the frontispiece of a pamphlet by l'Abbé Leblanc, engraved by Le Bas, which is thus described:—

A woman is seated before an easel, upon which is placed a canvas representing sketches of cupids. The woman is bent double and gagged, and she holds a palette in her hand. Her expression is almost fierce, as she turns her head away from a group of three figures, hovering behind her. A thick heavy figure represents Ignorance; beside her Envy, sour-faced and thin, is taking counsel with Hatred, and with skeleton hands they are pointing to the picture. Towering over them all, with ears majestically pricked up, jaws wide open, a donkey brays loudly, evidently overpowering all other sounds.

The sarcasm was well merited, for Ignorance

and Envy were raising their voices against the "Anacreon of Painters." The critics took upon themselves to give this almost veteran artist advice; they placed him side by side with the Italian Albani, and while allowing that Boucher had more "piquant" and "variety," they pointed out that Albani excelled in modesty, that Boucher's women were charming mistresses, but that one would rather choose a wife from among the Italian artist's women. In writing of the "Nativity," extolling the colouring, etc., we find this remark: "It only shows what the artist could do if he applied himself." To have "applied himself" would have necessitated time, which was a scarce commodity with Boucher, for orders came flowing in: work for the King, work for the Queen of Poland, etc.

The public accounts testify to the sums of money paid to him at different times: 2,400 livres and 12,000 livres; also the more modest sum of 600 livres for a picture of "The Return of Diana's Nymphs from Hunting," which picture was intended for the King's dining-room at Fontainebleau.

Three pictures are mentioned for the apartments at Choisy, namely: 1, "L'Amour qui caresse sa mère," 800 livres; 2, "Venus desarme son fils," 800 livres; 3, "Venus regarde dormir l'Amour," 800 livres.

In February, 1749, Lenormant de Tourneheim

sent him an order for five pictures for the Queen's apartments. In the same year we note: "La Toilette de Venus," "Les Graces enchainant l'Amour," and several others.

1750 has a long list, but the most remarkable picture of this year was "The Adoration of the Shepherds," painted for Madame de Pompadour's private chapel at Bellevue. He did several other decorations for the same chateau; in fact, he was never without orders for one or the other of the numerous chateaux belonging either to the King or to his favourite.

His larger pictures are all in the same style, mostly mythological. There is a sameness about the subjects which often palls upon the taste; the women's faces are all alike, beautiful in colouring but expressionless, or rather, we would say, lacking in intelligence. He was a master in colouring, and so exquisite were his tints, that for a long time he fascinated the multitude, who—charmed—failed to see the defects of his drawing and the monotony of his composition. Gradually his work spread over France, and was for a time the rage. All the provincial museums strove to possess at least one of his pictures. Angers secured in 1751 the "Réunion des génies des Arts," an unsympathetic subject, in which figures were crowded together, but which was appreciated for its colouring, and the evident touch of the master's



THE TOILET OF VENUS

hand. Tours boasted of two Bouchers, one in the Museum, "Apollo with a Shepherdess," the other the property of Monsieur Belle, "Latone dans l'Île de Delous," said to be one of the finest Bouchers in existence.

So far we have followed Boucher from his childhood upwards, always gay, throwing off work as if it were mere play. He had thus climbed almost to the top of the ladder of fame, and now, though for some years still he maintained his supremacy, he gradually found others creeping up behind him, questioning his right to the position of "first painter in France"; but he held his footing, and never dropped his brush until death shut out from his visual senses the fair images of the gods and goddesses of ancient Greece, with whom he had lived in such close intimacy that they had come to be to him as living realities. The pagan world charmed him far more than the Christian era, because of the natural sensuality of his nature. Except on rare occasions, he failed to rise to the full conception of the purity of a religion which taught self-denial and the crushing out of those passions which were to him, and to the world which patronised him, the essence of life itself, earth of the earthy.

CHAPTER V

AT THE LOUVRE

Abel Poison, Madame de Pompadour's brother, is made Director of the King's buildings—Boucher from henceforth has a powerful friend—He is made Director of the Academy of France at Rome, with a lodging at the Louvre—Pecuniary advantages not great—The ceilings of Fontainebleau—The rising and the setting sun—Boucher the modern Correggio—Grimm—Boucher's enormous capability for work and production—His interest in, and the success of, his pupils—Reynolds's visit to his studio—"The Painter at Home" in the La Caze Gallery—Sale of Boucher's pictures at the present day.

INTEREST, apart from merit, is a ladder upon which many climb to fame. Boucher had won artistic fame in a great measure by his genius, but he was as eager as others for promotion, and it came to him unexpectedly.

Lenormant de Tourneheim died suddenly on the 19th of November, 1751, leaving vacant the office of Director of the King's buildings, castles, houses, parks, gardens, arts, and manufactures. He was succeeded immediately by Madame de Pompadour's brother, Abel Poison de Vaudières, a young man of only twenty-five years of age.

Boucher had no reason to complain, even so far in his career, that he had been either neglected or passed over; still the nomination of the new director ensured his position. He might ask what he would of the dispenser of royal favours, and the opportunity was not long in presenting itself.

The Director of the Academy of France, Jean François de Troy, died on the 24th of January, 1752, and Abel Poison (better known as the Marquis de Marigny, though he was not invested with that title till 1754), without waiting for the crowd of applicants whom he knew would besiege him, laid his report before the King to this effect: "Monsieur de Troy, late Director of the Academy established in his Majesty's service at Rome, having departed this life, to our great regret, leaving vacant a pension of 1,000 livres, we venture to entreat your Majesty to bestow this position upon Sieur Boucher, an artist of his Majesty's Academy, who has distinguished himself in art and in all manner of work confided to him by his Majesty."

Such an appeal was naturally successful, and Boucher was given the appointment.

But there was one thing which artists of the time desired even more than a pension, the payment of which was often tardy, namely, the obtaining of a studio or a lodging in the Louvre. Boucher had for years striven for this

privilege, but in vain, though friends had supported his request in verse, giving it to be understood that beneath the King's august roof his paintings would attain a greater measure of grandeur and power, but they had only succeeded in getting him a studio at the King's library on the ground floor looking into the courtyard. It remained for Marigny to bestow upon Boucher his heart's desire. He placed at his disposal a studio in the gallery of the Louvre, which fell vacant by the death of Charles Antoine Coypel, first painter to, and caretaker of, the King's drawings. Boucher also stood first on the list of candidates for the envied position of "first painter." Natoire, writing from Rome, mentions Boucher and Van Loo as candidates. "I am only waiting to hear the decision to send them my congratulations," he wrote. But this honour was delayed for some time, for several reasons. Grimm says Van Loo could neither read nor write, and Boucher was too busy; there was also a lack of funds in the Exchequer. The state of the Treasury was deplorable; expedients had to be resorted to, to satisfy the claims of artists and workmen. There could be no question of checking the extravagant prodigality in high places—the only thing possible was to put a stop to minor expenditures, which did not affect the great personages of State.

When Charles Coypel had been nominated "first painter" to the King, he had been warned that he must not reckon upon more than a tenth of the usual pension—something like 2,000 livres and the uniform. It was hoped, however, that matters might improve, but such was not the case. The death of the Duke of Orleans deprived Coypel of a pension, which had helped to eke out a livelihood, and he had to address himself to the King for an increase of means to enable him to maintain with decency the position in which he was placed. After much discussion and great difficulty, he obtained a personal pension of 3,000 livres.

It is evident, therefore, that the pecuniary advantages were not what Boucher most desired. What tempted him was Coypel's studio and his lodging at the Louvre; and he obtained both these in September, 1752.

To this grant there is a rather interesting clause attached, which shows the low state of the Royal Exchequer. Boucher found his new studio in such a dilapidated condition that, before he could possibly make use of it, he had to ask for certain repairs; the walls and the flooring were so rotten that they were not strong enough to support the raised platform and easels necessary for his models and his work.

In answer to his request that this should be

done, he received the following letter from Monsieur de Marigny :—

"I have received from Monsieur d'Isle, the architect, the plans and estimate for the reparations of your studio. The latter is estimated at 753 livres. You are aware that my greatest desire is to oblige you; at the same time, you have already made several requests to the King lately, and I cannot take upon myself this new expense without notifying the same to his Majesty, which might do you some harm, especially if he answered me by saying, 'My late first painter was satisfied with the studio as it is; surely Monsieur Boucher can do likewise!' I should advise you, as a friend, not to lay yourself open to such a rebuff."

Probably the reparations were smuggled through somehow without applying to the King, and paid for in due time, for there is an account a few years later of 9,000 livres paid to Boucher for reparations and decorations.

He was now in full swing of work on the ceilings of Fontainebleau—the principal piece being "The Rising Sun driving away the Night," and the "Seasons," represented by children, which we have mentioned before as being exhibited in the Salon of that same year.

In these large decorative scenes Boucher was

thoroughly at home. There is a spirit, almost joy, in his painting as he throws off on to the canvas gods and goddesses, brilliant in colouring, in the midst of clouds, surrounded by soft ethereal lights and shades; floating draperies are cast carelessly over luminous figures, which charm the senses. In the four corners of this wonderful ceiling large medallions with cupids, such as Boucher delighted to paint, look down laughing from their gilded *entourage*.

"The Rising and the Setting of the Sun," originally designed for the Gobelin manufacture, were exhibited in the Salon of 1753. They measured eleven feet in height and nine in breadth. They were bought by Madame de Pompadour, and at the sale of her effects passed into the possession of Monsieur de Saincy, who paid 9,800 livres for them. Afterwards they were purchased by Sir Richard Wallace. They obtained a perfect ovation. L'Abbé Leblanc was profuse in his expressions of admiration. "It is wonderful," he writes, "where Monsieur Boucher finds models of such perfect grace and beauty. His brush is at the same time delicate and powerful, in his nymphs and Tritons. The transparency of the sea, the clearness of the atmosphere, the spirit of gallantry and voluptuousness, which pervades the whole, is marvellous."

In an ode to Painting, by Milord Telliard, a

pseudonym adopted by an Englishman, Boucher is called "The Modern Correggio, whose hand gathers roses, where others find only thorns. Boucher is acquainted with more than three Graces—his eyes have seen more than one Venus! By his tender and passionate interpretation, it is evident that the artist has fathomed all the mysteries of love."

Grimm's admiration was more tempered. He was no admirer of Boucher, speaking of him more than once as that "painter of fans." He considers his colouring "detestable," his flesh-tints "exasperating," and his drawing "bad"; finally, he winds up by declaring that, "in his opinion, these two much-vaunted pictures are amongst the worst in the Salon."

Boucher's own opinion was that they were among his best productions.

Two "pastorales" completed his list for the Salon, 1753.

Boucher was, in truth, indefatigable. Notwithstanding all this work, which would have killed another man, he found time for pleasure, and went gaily on, accepting new orders, completing old ones. No château was considered complete unless a "Boucher" adorned its walls. He painted two exquisite panels for the Château de la Muette, for which he received 2,400 livres; he decorated the Théâtre de St. Laurent, besides



PASTORAL SCENE



PASTORAL SCENE



SPILT MILK

sketching the scenery and the costumes; his hand and his imagination were both inexhaustible, to say nothing of his good nature. Amateurs fought for his sketches; engravers stood impatiently at his easel, to carry away his drawings as quickly as he could throw them off.

We find a list of engravings which appeared in 1753—doubtless it is an incompatible list, but such as it is, we give it. Several heads of young girls, "A Rustic Bridge," "A Well," "Four Subjects of Children," "A Fisherman," "A Shepherd," "A Poet," Illustrations of the "Hermit" of La Fontaine, "A Young Woman standing in a Park." Besides these, he provided for Madame de Pompadour the subjects and the models of four statues for her Château de Crécy. These statues were charming, not in his usual mythological style, but simple home subjects—"A Female Gardener," "A Butter Maker," "A Milkmaid."

He fulfilled his academical duties conscientiously; he was one of the most popular professors in the studios. Every sort of outside work fell to his lot; he never shirked anything. He visited art collections in great houses, such as that of the Marquis de Crillon, to choose pictures for the King's collections. He was chosen, with Van Loo, Sylvestre, and others, to examine Rubens's pictures in the Luxembourg, and report

upon them, some of them having been attacked with a grey mildew. A new process for removing this had been discovered by Madame Godefroy, and he was called upon to decide whether it was likely to prove efficacious or not, and whether it could be used without removing or injuring the picture.

His pupils were a source of great interest to him ; he always strove, to the best of his ability, to further their interests. He rejoiced over their success more even than over his own, and was, therefore, very naturally adored by them. In 1748 the first prize for painting was obtained by Sieur La Traverse (pupil of Monsieur Boucher). In 1750 the Laureate was Sieur Miluide (another pupil). In 1751 Sieur Deshayes obtained the same distinction, and was, moreover, sent to Rome. Several others were equally successful. On the 31st of December, 1753, Carle Van Loo, master of the Government pupils, was notified to receive into the school at Rome Sieur Brenet, historical painter, pupil of Monsieur Boucher, who had carried off the prize for painting, December, 1753 ; also the Sieur Fragonard, who, in 1752, had taken the first prize—both were pupils of Monsieur Boucher. Boucher was, in reality, too much occupied at the present time ; he had to rush his work.

Reynolds, passing through Paris, visited him in his studio, and found him painting a large

picture without a sketch or model of any sort. Reynolds expressing his surprise at this, Boucher explained that in his youth he had considered models necessary, as he was studying art, but that he had long since ceased to make use of them.

In the Gallery La Caze is a picture, "The Painter at Home." It represents Boucher seated in his studio in a dressing-gown and cotton night-cap, in the midst of a charming disorder, his wife standing behind him, a child in her arms, and their two boys, one mixing colours, the other holding a palette.

He had neither time to study nature or to give the minimum of time necessary to perfect his work; also, naturally, this began to be perceptible. Alas! age was also creeping on him; the shadows were falling; the lightness, the brilliancy, the joy, which were such integral points of his early style, were less perceptible.

He had risen to the summit of the mountain; now, alas! he had to descend on the other side. It is the fate of all mortals. How true the proverb: "Whom the gods love die young." But for some there is a resurrection, even in this world. Such fell to the lot of Boucher. For some years his glory passed away; his pictures sold for next to nothing. They were out of fashion, but "a thing of beauty is a joy for

ever," and at the present time his pictures are even more highly valued than when first they charmed the public. As proof of this, we have but to note a sale which took place in Paris during the month of May, 1903, when a Beauvais tapestry, with classical subjects by Boucher, sold for £5,600; and later still, in London, at Christie's, on the 24th May, 1903, Boucher's quartette panels, painted for Madame de Pompadour, "The Fortune Teller," "Love's Message," "Love's Offering," "Evening," fetched the large sum of 22,300 guineas!

In 1887, at the Lonsdale sale, the portrait of Madame de Pompadour fetched £10,000, and passed into the possession of Mr. Ferdinand de Rothschild. Boucher's favourite pupil, Fragonard, has benefited by his master's revival; a picture by him in Boucher's style fetched in February, 1893, at a sale at Cannes, 50,000 francs. There is always something sad in an after-death renown, but it is, and has been, the fate of many. Fortunately, Boucher wore his laurels both during his lifetime and after.



LOVE'S MESSENGER



LOVE'S OFFERING

CHAPTER VI

HIS DIFFERENT STYLES

Boucher the fashion, with the result that he had to produce with ever-increasing rapidity sketches in black and white, in pastels, etc.—His fortune increases rapidly—He develops a passion for collecting curiosities—Notice in the *Mercure* of 1755—His eyesight begins to fail, which affects his colouring—He is given the place of Director of the Gobelins—Portraits of Madame de Pompadour—Boucher no portrait-painter, figure drawing and painting his specialities—Roslin's portrait of him in 1761, now at Versailles.

FASHION is a mighty power, but an artist is not always the better for being thus favoured, because he has to put on one side his own personality, and consider what is pleasing to others. Great popularity is often a prelude to the decline of genius.

Boucher threw himself into the production of black and white, pastels, and sketches, all of which could be quickly reproduced by engravings. These became a perfect passion with the public. People who could not afford pictures could indulge in these reproductions, and the demand for them was ever on the increase.

It was said by his friends that he never profited, as he might have done, to raise his prices by this increasing popularity. Nevertheless, during the next few years his fortune was considerable, and he and his family enjoyed not only ease, but luxury. He himself indulged in the fancies of a rich man and an artist. He decorated and arranged his lodging at the Louvre, collecting all manner of curiosities. He is said to have spent no less than 9,000 livres in thus satisfying his taste. We find noted among his purchases such things as a *pot-pourri* in old white porcelain, boxes of Indian scented wood, vases of old blue porcelain, estimated to cost 1,200 livres; a cabinet in rosewood, to contain a collection of stones, onyx, rubies, topazes, nuggets of gold, opals, emeralds,—too long a list for us to enumerate. Another case contained rare birds and insects from all parts of the world. He seems to have had an especial pleasure in butterflies; he had a great variety from India and China; quantities of blue butterflies from the river Amazon, which shone and glistened continuously before his eyes, sparkling with every possible variety of colour. Added to these, he collected manuscripts and prints. In a sale of his belongings we find mentioned several pen-and-ink sketches by Rembrandt, and twenty-three engravings by the same artist. At another time we note fourteen drawings and



THE FLUTE-PLAYER

five sketches by Rubens. Pictures by Jordaens, Teniers, Pietro Berrettini de Cortone, and Van Goyens. He utilised this collection for models; it was an assemblage of good and bad geniuses, as well as a revelation of his natural tastes.

In the *Mercure* of the month of March, 1755, the following notice appeared: "There are surprises in art productions as there are in works of literature; and for the honour of art and the legitimate reputation of the artist, it is well to warn the public that at the present time Sieur Duflos is publishing a set of prints said to be reproductions of pictures by Monsieur Boucher; whereas they are reproductions of bad drawings made by pupils of the master, and given without his knowledge to the engraver, who sells these without the permission of the artist, who refuses entirely to acknowledge them."

In the number of the *Mercure* for the month of May Duflos answered this accusation in the following terms: "Mr. Boucher's drawings are so popular that engravers are sure to find a market for them; but every great man has his hobby—Mr. Boucher's is to avoid being engraved. Occupied with work which pleases him, the minutes pass, and he has not time always to produce fresh work. His pictures in private houses are not known by everybody. If he receives an order from the provinces, a few strokes of his pencil, something

added here, or something taken away, make a new picture, and the artist has thus time to breathe. The printer loses, the public also, but *the academician gains.*"

This answer was sharp and struck home. With rapid production, such as Boucher's, art must needs suffer, work becomes mechanical, routine takes the place of inspiration, and, as a wheel goes round, so stuff is produced which does honour neither to the artist nor the engraver.

Probably this served as a check, for from this time forth there is an evident slackening; Boucher's signature is less frequent; one gem, "The Windmill," is of this period, and was, as it is still, greatly admired. His eyesight was beginning to fail; his flesh-tints deepened in colour, as if a reddish hue had been cast over them. He was aware that this was being remarked upon, and he himself said it must be the effect of sight; for that he only saw an earthy colour, which the public declared to be cinnabar and vermilion.

Another cause of this defect in colouring arose from his continuous work for the tapestry manufactories, where it is necessary to exaggerate the colouring to obtain the desired effects. Oudry had, as we have seen, introduced Boucher to the Beauvais manufactory, and later to the Gobelins, where several of his works had already been produced,

the most remarkable ones being, "L'Amour allumant son Flambeau au Feu du Soleil." At Oudry's death, in 1755, Marigny requested the King to give the place to Boucher, which he did, and Boucher became Director of the Gobelins, with a salary of 2,000 livres. Oudry had during the last years been at variance with his workers, who received the news of Boucher's nomination with enthusiasm. From henceforth Boucher was the great purveyor for the tapestry manufactories. His first work was seven hangings for the King's apartments at Compiègne. He took his subjects from his favourite source, Mythology. Jupiter and Venus were his favourites, and these seven hangings represented the "Amours des Dieux," which is still the property of the Government. In this work Boucher introduced the vignette style. He did it charmingly; the subjects were framed in medallions, with a deep gold border, and suspended like pictures by a garland of flowers. They stand out upon a rose-coloured background, framed in a deeper shade of the same, which is again surrounded by a broad gold border. It is a magnificent work, well carried out by Neilson. For two years Boucher failed to put in an appearance at the Salon; it was rumoured that he was offended by the criticisms to which he had been subjected.

In 1757 he was obliged to exhibit the portrait

of Madame de Pompadour, which he had finished the preceding year. He had already painted her as the "Muse Erato" and the "Muse Clio"; she was herself a muse, and it is but fair that artists should immortalise their benefactress. Boucher had already done this several times. In the "Bibliothèque Nationale," at the Musée de Versailles, there are pictures of her by him, both of them alike in style. She is essentially the King's mistress, decidedly coarse and sensual; but there is a portrait of her, in 1757, of a different type. A graceful woman, robed in orange silk, is standing beside an easel, resting one hand on a half-open portfolio of drawings. Here we have the artist, the friend of Boucher and of Couston!

In another picture of 1757 we again recognise her as the artist, also in La Tour's pastel, as signified by the portfolio, music-books, etc. There is a full-length portrait of her by Boucher, which represents her almost as a queen, occupied with affairs of state, an open bureau beside her, with official-looking papers, pen and pencil ready to hand. She is holding a book in her hand, and her face expresses thought and reflection. A long mirror behind her reflects her library and her clock, upon which cupids count the hours. She is arrayed in a blue robe, and a small dog is crouching at her feet. This picture was the subject of great discussion. Boucher's friends praised



MUSE ERATO



A PORTRAIT



A SKETCH FIGURE DRAWING

it in exaggerated terms, but when it was exhibited at the Salon Grimm's criticisms were scathing. "It is detestable in colouring," he wrote, "overladen with ornaments in the worst possible taste." This portrait was again exhibited, in 1883, at the Exhibition of Art of the Eighteenth Century in Paris, at the Galerie G. Petit.

Boucher was, in reality, no portrait-painter. Figure drawing and painting were his specialities. All the graceful lines of a woman's figure, the delicate flesh-tints, found their interpretation in him. His brush seemed to caress his divinity—for to him they were all gods and goddesses, creatures of beauty, Venuses and cupids, Love, or the children of Love.

It was the only style of painting over which he lingered, as we do linger over what we love; landscapes, sketches, religious subjects were tossed off with marvellous rapidity, but his mythological interpretation of love fascinated him.

In 1757 he executed several religious subjects: "Le Repos en Egypte," "L'Enfant Jésu avec St. Jean Baptiste à genoux," and later, in 1759, "A Virgin," which was severely criticised in the *Mercure* by Marmontel. Diderot, who later on was so severe upon Boucher, denouncing both his style and colouring, was touched by the tender beauty of this "Virgin." Whilst he condemned the colouring, the ornamentation, the

furniture of the room as out of taste and absurd, he nevertheless declares "he would gladly hang that picture in his study. You may abuse it, but, nevertheless, you will look at it," he says.

In dealing with small pictures, when he gave himself the time, Boucher never lost that delicacy of touch and colouring for which he was remarkable. But he was becoming more uncertain in his power of work; application was evidently an effort to him. Alas! age was creeping on, and was perceptible sooner than it need have been, owing to that double life of work and pleasure which he had carried to excess, and the effect of which was telling upon him.

In 1761 Roslin painted a portrait of him, which was exhibited at the Salon, and which is now to be seen at Versailles. It was said at the time to be a very good likeness. It is a sad picture—evidently life is no longer a joy. There is weariness expressed in the attitude and in the eyes; but he still holds his "porte-crayon" in his hand, as, when ill and dying, he held it; throwing off sketches, scraps of drapery, figures full of expression and daring, such as he, and he alone, could execute. He was the artist with the divine gift, even unto death. Such men, indeed, never die; and Boucher captivated many then even as he does to-day; but especially is he beloved by artists, who recognise the difficulties he over-

(Boucher) as "the destroyer of all true art in France."

That Boucher's reputation as an artist of value is still intact is sufficient proof that such was not the case. In the year 1763 he roused himself, and by a supreme effort of will completed his two pictures, "Venus receiving the Prize of Beauty" and "Love Unarmed."

But fatigue was only too evident in his work; though he tried to shake it off, he was seriously ill; and on July 3rd, 1762, his academical colleagues desired Deshayes, his son-in-law, to express to him their regret and sympathy for his ill-health. Sorrow was also about to lay its hand heavily upon him. His two favourite pupils, Deshayes and Baudouin, had on the same day married his two daughters. Baudouin had died a few years previously, and now Deshayes was taken. The blow was heavy; he had been greatly attached to both of them, and in his then state of health he felt it acutely.

Moreover, his son, Juste Boucher, had proved a disappointment. He had refused to follow his father's career, feeling sure that his glory would overshadow him, so he studied architecture; but even in that line he attained only a second-rate position, which was a source of trouble to his father.

Throughout 1763 he continued to exhibit, but

A SURPRISE

ANNETTE'S SLUMBER

he was failing fast. Diderot was hard upon him. On one occasion, throwing his hands up to heaven, he pronounced his condemnation, even while he acknowledged his genius. "He has so much imagination, such effect, such magic, and such facility. His elegance, his debauchery, his mincing ways, captivate worldlings and dandies, but not people who respect themselves." It was a scathing reproach, and though it did not all reach Boucher's ears, he heard enough to give him pain, and he was fully aware of the change which was taking place in the public taste. The careless light-heartedness of the *siècle Louis XV.* was giving place to the new philosophy—the age of reason was dawning.

Greuze was beginning to treat art after the fashion of a schoolmaster, inculcating a moral lesson to his pupils. A voice here and there was raised against this degradation of art, but in vain; reason and domestic life were in the ascendency, virtue was idealised, gods were thrust upon one side.

"Rich people," wrote one man, "will not care to see an exposition of the coarseness and the sufferings of the peasants; it will remind some of them overmuch of misfortunes for which they are probably to a great extent responsible."

When the Château of Choisy was to be re-decorated, Marigny invited Cochin to indicate to

the artists the style of pictures likely to be acceptable. Cochin wrote to him on the subject: "The four pictures you ask for incline me to mention 'The Four Seasons,' or 'The Four Elements'; but these subjects have been rather used up, and there is little left for the most fertile genius to work upon. Warlike actions, great battles, which only serve to compass the destruction and misery of humanity, have been celebrated again and again. Would it not be advisable to show forth some noble action, or generous deed, which would glorify good kings and make their people happy?"

Diderot had conquered; it was from him Cochin had learnt this lesson of philosophy, and imbibed these ideas. He set to work, having chosen four subjects, namely, "Augustus closing the Gates of the Temple of Janus," "Titus setting his Prisoners Free," "Trajan's Justice," "Marcus Aurelius's Charity." The artists chosen to execute these pictures were Carle Van Loo, Vien, Deshayes, and Boucher. Poor Boucher, whose feelings were hurt and his conscience troubled, vaguely feeling himself a reprobate, to whom the title of the "Three Graces" was almost a disgrace, and to whom his "Graces Bathing," "Nymphs Bathing," "Hymen and Love," were becoming a reproach, was anxious to prove that he was as capable as any artist to do justice to an historical subject. Cochin knew this, and loving the old master,

he adopted this delicate way of satisfying his desire.

We find that this attempt officially to recognise "high art" proved a dead failure. On the 18th September, 1766, Marigny wrote a report to the King as follows: "I caused four pictures to be executed for Choisy, representing generous and humane actions by different princes. These pictures have not met with the success I had anticipated. I have, therefore, had them removed, and sent them to the manufactory of the Gobelins, where they will be useful. To supply their places, I have requested Monsieur Boucher, whose talent your Majesty so fully appreciates, to provide four others. His brush, guided by the Graces, is sure to produce something more suitable for the ornamentation of so beautiful and agreeable a habitation."

Boucher received the order, a veritable triumph for him, but he never executed it. His health failed him!

CHAPTER VII

FAILING

Madame de Pompadour's death, 1764—Boucher disappointed in his children—His friend Carle Van Loo's death; he is nominated to succeed him as First Painter—"L'Ecole Royale"—Boucher's popularity with students—His dislike to give advice except with his brush in his hand—His gentleness and kindness, which brought him much love—He was surrounded by affectionate friends and pupils—Serious illness, between life and death—Diderot's ill-placed criticism—Boucher never realised that he was expected to teach moral lessons with his brush—Recovered from illness he renews his labours—In 1766 he goes with a favourite pupil to Holland—His silence when attacked.

ON the 15th of April, 1764, Madame de Pompadour died, and Boucher lost a great friend and protectress. She died worn out by ambition and the struggle to maintain a position which ministered to her pride and enabled her to indulge in all the luxury which was a necessity of her nature. "Ma vie est un combat," she said; and truly it was so. For twenty years she governed the King, and for twenty years she governed Europe. Then the thread of life

snapped—the strain had been too great, and she died of weariness in the prime of life. Herself an artist, she was the friend of artists. "Elle est des notres," said Voltaire; and truly after her death the torch ceased to burn—it flickered, giving forth only casual sparks. The Marquis de Marigny, her brother, remained, however, Boucher's faithful friend. We have said that his son's inferiority as an artist was a subject of sore disappointment to him, and when he only succeeded in obtaining a second prize for architecture, Marigny, out of respect and affection for the father, offered him a position as supernumerary pensioner of the Academy at Rome. In a letter dated 18th August, 1764, addressed to Natoire, Marigny announced this nomination in the following terms: "Jean Nathan Boucher has a decided talent for architecture, and will, I think, be successful in that branch. He is the son of a man of merit, whom I both esteem and love, and therefore I take this opportunity of advancing his interests, and of recommending him to your especial attention." A little later Marigny wrote another letter to the same person to this effect: "You have afforded me real pleasure by your report on Monsieur Boucher's son, namely, that he is working after such a fashion as to render himself worthy of his father. Kindly let him know that I am satisfied, and that he may

reckon upon my doing everything in my power to further his interests."

The unexpected death of Boucher's lifelong friend and companion, Carle Van Loo, leaving vacant the post of First Painter to the King, was an opportunity which Marigny (Director-General) did not allow to slip by. He at once offered the appointment to Boucher; his name and qualifications were laid before the King, who affixed his signature to the act on the 8th of August, 1765.

"Monsieur," wrote Marigny, "accept my sincere congratulations for this evident appreciation of your superior talents by the King, in that he has nominated you his first painter. This honour is the more flattering as it seems to coincide with public opinion, and to give general satisfaction. The post you held of Superintendent of the Gobelins being incompatible with your new office, his Majesty has otherwise disposed of it. At the same time, so that you may suffer no pecuniary loss, he allows you to retain the pension of 1,200 livres which you already enjoy, and all the advantages attached to the situation which he has so justly bestowed upon you."

The posts which Boucher and Van Loo vacated were distributed amongst their own friends to the satisfaction of all persons concerned.

It was proposed at one time to make Boucher Director of l'École Royale des élèves protégés.

The post was in many ways suitable for him, as he was very popular in the studios because of his indulgent kindness and the facility with which he allowed the students to approach him. He was remarkable for his kindness to all débutants, the ready encouragement which he gave them, and his sympathy with them in their failures. As a proof of his popularity in 1767, the students protested somewhat noisily against the judgment of the Academy in respect of the "Prix de Rome." They ranged themselves in a double file in the "Place du Louvre," and hissed the academicians as they came out, but when Boucher appeared they applauded him.

When asked for advice, he gave it in a few concise words. If it happened to be a young artist who asked it, he was careful to show him by example instead of merely laying down rules for his guidance. "I can only really give proper advice," he was wont to say, "with my brush in my hand"; and this he was always ready and willing to do. He not only made himself beloved, but he had the knack of inspiring the young with the love of art and of work. He himself was a great worker, so he set them the example of practising what he preached. Notwithstanding all these points in his favour, it was thought doubtful by some whether, as Master of the Royal School, his teaching would be sufficiently orthodox; there-

fore, as Michael Van Loo offered himself as successor to his uncle, the post was given to him. In reality it was evident to everybody that Boucher was not in a fit state of health to hold any regular appointment. He was frequently obliged to delegate his authority to others, satisfied to hold the honorary titles. His natural gentleness, his generosity and kindness, begat love and silenced jealousy. It was a pleasant and no uncommon incident to see the old master surrounded by friends and pupils whom he loved and who loved him, between whom there was no bitterness, only ready homage for the past and generous encouragement for the future.

He succumbed at last to the illness which had been threatening him so long, and for many weeks he lay between life and death. This was followed by a protracted convalescence. What troubled him most during this period of trial was what always affects an artist most keenly—his work. It was at a standstill, and his great fear was lest he should not be able to exhibit at the yearly Salon.

The *Mercure*, always ready to befriend him, explained clearly to the public that it was illness alone which would prevent the King's first painter from exhibiting anything really important at the coming Salon. But Boucher determined otherwise; he borrowed from the Gallery of Monsieur



WINTER SPORT

Bergeret de Gòncourt two pictures of his own, for the duration of the Salon, and he added eight pastorals from his own studio. There is something sadly pathetic in the evident anxiety of the sick artist to hold his own against fate. He had reached the summit of the hill of fame, and he was loth to appear inferior to his position.

Unfortunately, Diderot's voice, which had for some time past been heard grumbling, like distant thunder, now broke forth with unexpected violence. "I hardly know what to say of this man," he wrote; "degradation of style, vitiated colouring, bad composition, have naturally followed upon the depravity of his morals. What imagination can a man have who has passed his life in the study of mythological prostitution? I affirm that such a man does not so much as understand what grace means; he has never known truth; delicacy, innocency, and simplicity are strangers to him. He has never seen nature, at least, not the nature with which we are familiar! He paints children, he groups them well, but they remain floating in the clouds. Not one of his innumerable family is employed in any natural life-like occupation, such as studying a lesson, reading, writing, or picking flax!"

We can scarcely refrain from smiling at such criticism. We feel that Diderot's appreciation of the artist and the man is unjust and narrow.

Poor Boucher! He had never thought of sending his cupids to school to make philosophers of them; it had never struck him that painting could be utilised for the moral good of humanity! He did not conceive the possibility of teaching a lesson with his brush—that was not art as he understood it! So he continued to paint after his own fashion, trying nevertheless occasionally to meet the new requirements of the age, by treating religious subjects—such as the "Education of the Virgin," "The Virgin carrying the Infant Jesus in her arms"—but they were feeble examples. Evidently he was making an effort, and he always returned with renewed zest to his beloved Venus! In 1765 and 1766 he painted the "Venus and Cupid" which is now in the Berlin Museum; "Venus rising out of the Waters," for which he received 1,000 livres; "Cupid beseeching Venus to give him back his arms"; and several others of the same style. His brush never wearied. It was evident that as long as he lived he would paint—it was second nature to him; but the boldness—we might almost say the glory—of the artist was fading, as the flowers which he loved to paint also fade and die.

In 1766 he sketched several heads in charcoal and in red chalk, which his friend Demarteau reproduced with remarkable exactitude. And here we have again a striking proof of Boucher's



THE BATH

amiability. In an apartment in the Rue du Cloitre-Saint-Bénoit, inhabited by Demarteau, he decorated the salon with glimpses of landscapes, birds of all sorts, swans and wild ducks, mingling with tufts of roses and long trailing branches, out of the midst of which cupids disported themselves. We find a similar description by the poet Lamartine of the Queen's apartments at Versailles; but Boucher made this offering to friendship, an acknowledgment from the master to the engraver, who had so effectually given popularity to his works by their truthful and effective reproduction.

No marvel if this man was surrounded by friends to the last. He had the happy knack of making friends and of keeping them, which some people aver to be the more difficult task of the two. Boucher was not of those who are easily forsaken; he had none of that pride and petty jealousy against those who are also attempting to carve themselves a path to success and honour. His pupils were his friends, a part of his own life; they entered into his family. From amidst them his daughters chose their husbands, who were both very dear to their father-in-law, and whose premature deaths, as we have already shown, caused him poignant grief. Raudon du Boisset was another of his favoured pupils. Boucher devoted himself to teaching him everything which

could further his advancement. He did this with affection and pleasure, and Raudon Boisset returned it tenfold. In 1766, when Boucher had apparently recovered from his long illness, the two travelled to Holland together, doubtless for the purpose of studying Dutch art; what the result was on Boucher we are not informed, but his temperament differed so entirely from the Dutch characteristics that it is probable he was very slightly affected by them.

Diderot was certainly set upon tormenting the old artist to the last. If Boucher exhibited, he, as we have seen, abused his work; and when he failed to do so at the Salon of 1757, the philosopher was equally vindictive. At one time Diderot cried out, "Let this man, who calls himself an artist, be turned out of the Salon"; at another time, "How comes it, Monsieur Boucher, that you, to whom, as 'first painter' to the King, the progress of art ought to be so especially dear, fail to put in an appearance? There can be but one reason for this, namely, fear lest you should be obliged to hear unpleasant truths. Is this worthy of a man in your position?" In an article which he wrote on the "Present State of Painting," he is still more scathing. "I was forgetting *him*, but it does not signify; *he* will hardly leave a name behind him—he who might have been the first had he chosen to exert himself."

It is to Boucher's credit that he never replied to these attacks. Greuze would and did do so; he could not endure patiently the critic's lash; but Boucher bore the sting silently, much to his honour. He had faith in the future; he was content to leave his name in the hands of later generations, persuaded that what was good would be duly appreciated, what was bad would sink into oblivion. He could not, had he desired to do so, obliterate his life's work; he had to abide by it, as all artists and writers must of necessity. What is painted is painted; what is written is written! We cast our impressions, our imaginings upon the waters, little heeding where or how they will be washed ashore, or sunk in the waters of Lethe.

CHAPTER VIII

THE END

The Salon of 1769 was the last at which Boucher exhibited—"A Caravan of Bohemians"—Boucher's reverence for art and his great modesty—He tries to suit himself to the new school—The shadows are falling—Last days—Friends and relations—His beautiful studio—His gradual decline—He continues his work to the last—Pathetic end—The *Mercure*—The closing of an epoch, the dawning of the Reign of Terror.

THE Salon of 1769 was the last at which Boucher exhibited; the end was slowly but surely creeping on. He was not what we term an old man; many are still hale and hearty in the early sixties; but he was worn out with the very capacity of living, which he possessed in a higher degree than most men. The picture he sent to this—his last—Salon was a "Caravan of Bohemians," after the style of Bennedetto.

"The old athlete would not die without one more appearance in the arena," wrote Diderot, a year after his death. It was unkindly thought, unkindly said, but, as a stoic philosopher, Diderot cared little whom he wounded, living or dead!

The master, so beloved by the nation, was passing away sadly, because the adulation which had ever been as music to his ears had become discordant. He did not understand the change in the note; he had struggled so bravely to suit the taste of the people he had served so long. Perhaps if he had had the courage to hold fast to the art he loved, unheeding the open-mouthed critics, he would have fared better. But the praise or blame of our fellow-men strikes home; we desire, and yet at the same time we fear, it! Moreover, Boucher was a time-server; the King was his master, he had served his time.

There is nothing so pathetic, and at the same time so true, as the words which Shakespeare puts into Wolsey's mouth when, old and weary with life's battle, he asked admittance into the Abbey, there to die: "Had I but served my God with half the zeal I served my King, He would not in mine age Have left me naked to mine enemies." The fear of man's criticism has often silenced the poet's song, killed enthusiasm, and caused the artist to throw his brush down in despair. "We cannot serve God and mammon," and art and poetry are the divine attributes of our higher nature and will yield to no mundane rival. So Boucher was stung with the arrows of criticism, which he only partially understood, and yet, in his natural humility, was ready to accept. He himself was

so keenly alive to the greatness of art that he retained to the last that modesty which is the outcome of knowledge. We have a signal proof of this in the fact that being asked to retouch a picture of one of the first old Italian masters, he refused to do so. "Such works are holy vessels to me," he said; and so silenced those who, from ignorance, had no such scruples.

A Swedish savant, Liden, was travelling in France in 1769, and has left us manuscripts full of details concerning the learned men, the French artists of his time. Of Boucher he speaks according to hearsay. "Monsieur Boucher is considered to lack correctness; his eyes are too large, his noses too small, and there is in his pictures a monotony of expression."

The same thing was said later of Greuze; indeed, monotony and repetition seem to have been the general complaint brought against this school, especially against Greuze, who borrowed largely from Boucher.

Notwithstanding his failing health, "the Great Blusterer," as Diderot surnamed him, never laid his pencil on one side. He produced during this last year three pictures: "Wisdom and Justice," and "The Young Mother sleeping beside her Child"—both are in the collection of the late Duc d'Aumale; also, "The Presentation in the Temple," which is in the Louvre.



A SKETCH

If the brilliant period of his life was over, there is something touching in the picture of the veteran artist passing away in his beautiful studio in the Louvre, with all the surroundings which were congenial to his nature, able to employ his mind and hand at the work he loved so well—his wife and his children, and his children's children around him. Friends also went and came—old pupils who loved him. In the Journal of Jean Jacques Wille, the engraver, we find mentioned "that he dined on the 13th February at Monsieur Basan's with Monsieur Boucher, First Painter to the King."

That he was very ill even then was evident to all who had access to him. "A mere shadow of his former self, a spectre," Grimm writes, "suffering from every infirmity resulting from a life consumed in work and ill-regulated pleasures."

He lingered till the 3rd of May, 1770, when he died, at five o'clock in the morning, in his studio, alone, seated before an unfinished picture of Venus, which he had directed his wife to give to his friend and physician, Poissonnier. Only when death stole upon him did he let the brush drop from his fingers! Whatever his faults were Boucher was true to his own instincts; and in the then state of the artistic world his death was a very great loss to his country, and indeed to the

whole civilised world. The papers of the period were, of course, full of notices of a man who had occupied so prominent a position in art. Some were kindly, some were unkindly, but the general tone was one of regret that so pleasing an artist, and so kindly a man, should have passed away.

He was buried on the 31st of May, at St. Germain l'Auxerrois, in the presence of his son, Juste Nathan Boucher, of his grandson, F. J. Baudorim, Monsieur de Cavilliers, First Clerk of the King's buildings, and his friends, Michel Van Loo, Pierre, and Vien. Doubtless many others were present whose names have not been recorded. The *Mercure*, a paper which had been throughout his career faithful to him, published in its pages, after his death, the following touching verses, which throw light upon the character of the man and the artist; they also show the sentiments he inspired in those he left behind.

"Cet heureux et brilliant génie
Eut pour maître, l'amour et le dieu des beaux-arts,
Noble et voluptueux, toujours plein d'énergie,
Il sut parler au cœur, et charmer les regards.

* * * * * *

D'une main bienfaisante et sûre
Il guida les efforts naissants,
Et sans s'armer du fiel de la censure,
De ses rivaux il voyait les talents,
Comme il dessinait la nature."

When Boucher died the society of which he had been the centre, whose tastes and ideas he had created, was already tottering; a little longer and it ceased to exist. A new epoch was about to dawn—the rose-coloured hues of Boucher's creations were to be dyed red in the blood of that very nobility which had admired the painter of the "Three Graces."

The days of gallantry were well-nigh over. The tempests of the Revolution, which was to sweep over the face of France, and for a time, at least, change the outward aspect of all things, was about to break forth. The people were weary of the slavery, of the grinding misery to which the extortionate demands of the Pompadours and the Du Barrys had reduced the Treasury. Folly and vice were represented by Venuses and cupids, by all that ministers to the lusts of the eye and the pride of life. Laughter and merriment were soon to be at an end.

Of all Boucher's pupils, Honoré Fragonard was the only one who lived long enough to see his old and beloved master discredited, and his pictures sold in second-hand shops at vile prices. It must have been bitter grief and pain to him! If he could but have looked into the future and have seen the resurrection-day. Alas! he wept over the glories of the past, as one without hope; to

him his master was dead and buried, hidden out of sight and forgotten.

The pendulum swung the other way. The graceful, frivolous mythology of Greece was cast on one side, to be succeeded by a Brutus or a Leonidas! Boucher was flouted by the very youth he had recommended to study under Jacques Vien. David had now bloomed out into a full-blown artist, a worshipper of the new school with straight lines of warrior-like severity, anathematising with all the sternness of a young Republican the voluptuousness of a court artist steeped in amorous folly.

A few years more, and the mansion of the Princess de Soubise, which Boucher decorated with panels and pictures in his own familiar style of love and flowers, was transformed into a Museum of Records. In the alcove of the sleeping-room, where once two pastorals, "The Shepherd's Offering," smiled down upon the fair mistress, there was exhibited, in a glass case, the last letter, the final adieu of the unfortunate Queen Marie Antoinette to Madame Elizabeth. Further on, in a room in which a picture of "Love listening to Mercury" was hung, in similar closed cases were preserved the judgments of the Revolutionary Tribunal; the requisitions made by Fouquier-Tinville for an escort to conduct the condemned to death, and the original act

which condemned twenty-two Girondist deputies to death. Among the signatures is that of David. Further on, we have other decrees signed by Bonaparte. A whole world of history unfolds itself in this mansion built and adorned for pleasure. A tragedy in itself! We have but to close our eyes, to shut out the present, and a panorama passes before us—a marvellous procession of men and women succeeding each other, slaying and being slain.

But to return to Boucher. Even when his reputation was at its lowest ebb, when he was held up to ridicule by the young school, there was still someone to speak a good word for the master, who had loved his art more than all things else in the world; and that word was spoken by the successful artist, David, to his own followers. He took up the cudgels in behalf of the master whose triumph he had witnessed and whose kindness he had experienced. He reminded them that if Boucher were guilty of ignoring the beauty of the style they considered most orthodox, namely, the straight, pure line, he had natural qualities of great price, which were not learnt in the schools; and, with a superb irony, he exclaimed, looking around amongst them, "It is not given to everyone to be a Boucher!"

The breaking up of the artist's home necessitated the dispersing of his collections. Boucher

had been very proud of his shells, which attracted much attention on account of their size, colour, and their beautiful state of preservation. His minerals were also very choice. He had conceived an ingenious mode for showing both these off to advantage, by means of tables covered with glass, upon which he placed the shells, and obtained thus the most wonderful effects of light and colour. It had taken him years to gather these together; and the minerals and enamels were of rare beauty. They were, after his death, put up for sale, and, by a catalogue in the National Library, we find the contents of his studio was disposed of for the following prices:—

Pictures	22,678 livres.
Drawings	15,891 ,,
Prints	2,261 ,,
Bronzes, lacquer-work, etc.	9,693 ,,
China, etc.	14,452 ,,
Antique furniture	15,170 ,,
Minerals, etc.	6,422 ,,
Stones, etc.	3,444 ,,
Shells	6,738 ,,
Appendices	17,284 ,,

The produce of this sale was all the inheritance he left to be divided between his wife and children.

A pension of 1,200 livres was granted, after

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SHEPHERD AND SHEPHERDESS

Marigny's report, by the King to Madame Boucher; and when, on the 22nd of December of the same year, her daughter, Madame Deshayes, died, the little apartment which she occupied in the Louvre was offered to her mother, and gratefully accepted. Some years later, in 1785, the widow of her husband's friend, Madame Carle Van Loo, dying, the pension which had been granted her was passed over to Madame Boucher by the Comte d'Angivilliers, then Directer-General. She was effusive in her thanks, "deeply touched," she said, by the honour done to her husband's memory in this public acknowledgment of his talents.

Thus closes the career of one of the most prominent artistic figures of the *siècle Louis XV.* Indeed, it is doubtful whether without Boucher and Watteau this term would have had any marked significance, unless it be to designate the debauchery and vice of a court unequalled in the annals of modern history.

Boucher was the artist of the period, and unfortunately he pandered to the tastes of those upon whom he was dependent, thus degrading art. It was a weakness to be deplored, but we must take into account the education of the time, the laxity of all sense of morality.

He sought to reproduce beauty as it appeared to him in nature, and the material was ever before his eyes:—flowers, children and women, love in

all its aspects, from gods and goddesses to the shepherds and shepherdesses whom he idealised till they resembled rather court ladies in disguise than the peasants they were supposed to represent. The certain proof that Boucher was, notwithstanding the criticisms of his enemies, a great artist, is in the fact that he has attained what falls to the lot of the few only—Immortality!

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LIST OF BOUCHER'S PAINTINGS

Venus on the Water.
A Shepherd teaching a Shepherdess to play the Flute.
The Judgment of Susannah.
The Birth of Adonis.
Death of Adonis.
The Deliverance of Joachim.
The Abduction of Europa.
Notre-Dames-des-Victoires.
A Country Woman from the Environs of Ferrare.
The Meeting of Rachel and Jacob.
Eliezar and Rebecca.
The Jesuit Martyrs of Japan.
The Marriage of the Children of God and the Children of Men.
The Departure of Jacob.
The Separation of Laban and Jacob.
Noah entering the Ark.
Noah offering a Sacrifice.
Rebecca receiving Presents from Abraham's Servant.
The Angel and the Family of Tobias.
The Sacrifice of Jephthah.
The Sacrifice of Gideon.
Moses saved from the Waters.
Jesus blessing St. John.
The Pilgrims of Emmaus.
The Love of Venus and Vulcan.
Mars and Venus surprised by Vulcan.
Venus and the Cupids.
The Judgment of Paris.
The Triumph of Neptune and Venus on the Waters.
Venus at the Bath.
Venus at Peace.
Venus on the Waters.
Love doing Homage to Venus.
Venus and Æneas.
The Muse Clio.
The Muse Melpomene.
A Pastoral (1743).
Pastorals.
The Marriage of Psyche.
The Breakfast.
The Magnificent One.
The Almanack of Old Men.

Morning.
Mid-day.
After Dinner.
Night.
The Seller of Fashions.
The Woman Lying Down.
Decorations of the Opera.
The Palace of the River Sangar.
Venus ordering Weapons for Æneas.
Venus Asleep.
The Beautiful Cook.
The Beautiful Village Maid.
The Happy Age.
Ceres.
The Spring.
A Pastoral.
A Shepherd and a Shepherdess conversing.
Love, the Gleaner.
Love, the Bird-Catcher.
Love at the Vintage.
Love Swimming.
The Four Seasons (1735).
Charity.
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Fidelity.
Prudence.
Sancho followed by the Scullions of the Duke.
Bacchus and Ariadne.
Ariadne Forsaken.
The Feast of Bacchus.
Mars and Venus.
Psyche and Love.
The Toilet of Psyche.
The Offering to Love.
Amphitrite.
Molière's Comedies.
The Gathering of Cherries.
The Swing.
A Tiger Hunt.
A Crocodile Hunt.
The Fountain of Love.
Fortune-telling.
Landscapes and Animals.
Country Subjects.
The Four Seasons (1737).
The Graces chaining Love.
The Education of Love by Mercury.
Venus leaning on Love as she enters the Bath.
A Young Boy.
The Head of a Young Woman.
Psyche led by Zephyrus to the Palace of Love.
Psyche refusing Divine Honours.
A Landscape with a Mill (1740).
A Landscape (1741).
A Forest.
A Mill (1741).
The Hamlet of Issé.
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The Birth of Venus and the Triumph of Galatea.

Venus on the Waters.
The Birth and Triumph of Venus.
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Diana coming forth from her Bath with one of her Companions.
Diana's Return from Hunting.
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Landscape of the Environs of Beauvais.
Country Life.
The Country Fair.
The Birth of Venus (1743).
Venus coming forth from her Bath.
The Toilet of Venus (1746).
Venus and the Graces in the Bath.
Venus and Vulcan.
Venus's Toilet.
Venus on the Waters.
Venus receiving the Prize for Beauty.
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Venus unarming Love.
The Awakening of Venus.
Venus correcting Love.
Venus bathing Love.
Venus and Love Asleep near a Rose-tree.
The Repose of Venus.
Love caressing his Mother.
Venus disarming her Son.
Venus watching Cupid Asleep.
The Toilet of Venus.
The Graces chaining Cupid.
Allegorical Compositions.
The Shepherds Worshipping.
Chinese Views.
The Attributes of Agriculture.
A Sleeping Shepherdess.
The Agreeable Lesson.
The Gathering of the Geniuses of Art.
Apollo with a Shepherdess.
Latona in the Island of Delos.
The Sun begins his Course and dispels the Night.
The Seasons represented by Children.
The Rising of the Sun.
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Entrance Gate of La Muette (1753).
A Rustic Bridge.
A Fisherwoman.
A Young Woman standing in a Park.
The Painter in his Studio.
Painting.

A Pastoral.
Cupids at Play.
The Return of Diana.
Country Amusements.
The Charms of Spring.
The Pleasures of Summer.
The Delights of Autumn.
Winter Amusements.
Pastoral Music.
The Washerwoman.
Shepherds at the Fountain.
The Charms of Country Life.
The Mill.
Cupid lighting his Torch by the Fire of the Sun.
Jupiter and Leda.
Neptune and Amymone.
Jupiter and Calisto.
Vertumnus and Pomona.
Aurora and Cephalus.
Amyntor and Sylvia.
The Goal.
Metamorphosis.
The Fisherman.
The Fortune-teller.
Psyche and Cupid.
Diana and Endymion.
The Repast.
The Dance.
Music.
Cupids.
Children Playing.
The Muse Erato.
The Muse Clio.
Portraits of Madame la Marquise de Pompadour.
Rest in Egypt.
The Child Jesus with St. John the Baptist at his Knees.
The Virgin, or the Nativity.
Portrait of Madame Favart.
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Portrait of a Child.
Portrait of the Maréchal de Lowendal.
Portrait of Marie Peckzinska.
The Preaching of St. John the Baptist.
The Three Graces carrying Cupid.
Venus receiving the Prize of Beauty.
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The Sleep of the Child Jesus.
The Shepherd Asleep.
The Gallery of Choisy.
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Jupiter transformed into Diana to surprise Calisto.
Angelica and Médor.
The Education of the Virgin.
The Virgin carrying the Child Jesus in her Arms.
Venus and Cupid (1765).
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